THE NATIONAL SPORTING CLUB

PAST AND PRESENT

EDITED BY
A. F. BETTINSON
AND
W. OUTRAM TRISTRAM

Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.

6.14.

345

THE NATIONAL SPORTING CLUB

PAST AND PRESENT

THE EARL OF LONSDALE

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL SPORTING CLUB

Frontispiece

THE NATIONAL SPORTING CLUB

PAST AND PRESENT

A. E. BETTISON

W. GUNN PRITCHARD

SANDS & CO.
12, BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND
LONDON
1901

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Photo by *Alfred Lewis & Watson.*

C. W. BLACKLOCK, Esq.

To face Dedication.

Dedication

To C. W. BLACKLOCK, Esq.

Dear Blacklock,

In wishing you to accept the dedication of this book I have been moved by other motives than that I have known you for twenty-five years and have never met a better friend. In this fact lies the sentiment of the impulse. But this book purposes to deal principally with Boxing, and of Boxing you have been for many years the truest and most steadfast Patron.

Nor have you been Patron of Boxing alone. From the old Football days at Rugby, to the times in the North when you were reserved as an English International, and up to the present moment when you are freely acknowledged as one of the most experienced advisers of the National Sporting Club, to what form of manly and English Sport have you not lent encouragement and aid? What Sportsman in the widest acceptation of the term who happened to be straight, and in difficulties, has ever known you turn your back upon him? What truer friend has the often maligned Boxer had? What larger measure of advice and assistance than yours has been given to the Club which is now the head centre of his art?

And this book is written round the National Sporting Club's Record. With its present history since it assumed its now world-known name you are fully familiar. But the House itself is historic. Its past record has had to be touched upon—a record going back through the centuries. And it is because that record, in spite of changes in manners and customs, will be found strangely enough to have never been wholly disassociated from a general atmosphere of Sport—whether Racing, Boxing, Cudgel playing, or Electioneering—that no name can so fitly adorn its title-page as that of such an all-round Sportsman as Yourself.

Yours sincerely,

A. F. Bettinson.

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Photo by *Elliott & Fry*

CAPTAIN W. EDGEWORTH-JOHNSTONE

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BILL OF FARE

INTRODUCTORY

THE purpose of this book is to treat of Boxing and Kindred Sports from the standpoint of the National Sporting Club. For it would seem that the great national pastime of Englishmen cannot be more comprehensively viewed than from the vantage ground of an Institution which is at once its asylum and its centre. A further inducement to this attitude presents itself. The pitfall, it is to be hoped, may be avoided of treading in the footsteps of fertile and industrious predecessors. Boxing has at all times had its historians, and some of them are of recent growth. Apart from the practical manual in which the Royal Professor has pointed out the best methods for sending his readers to sleep, Mr. Watson has presented the public with a résumé of his experiences at the Ring side and the Old Bailey; and Captain W. Edgeworth-Johnstone (Royal Irish Regiment), Assistant Inspector of Gymnasia and

Heavy Weight Amateur Champion of England, 1895–6, and a well-known member of the Club, has in his book, *Boxing and the Modern System of Glove Fighting*, given some admirable up-to-date views of the Noble Art, in which an ably written text is assisted by copious illustration. Finally "A Pink Un" has recorded with no uncertain hand a long train of facetious recollections which group memories of the Ring, the Racecourse, and the Drinking Saloon under the shadow of a club now defunct.

It is from the ruins of the Pelican that the National Sporting Club has reared itself. We may therefore still be said to be in a measure availing ourselves of the torch which the Pelican's historian has handed on. We shall, however, hope in this further exploration of Sport's fruitful fields, to cull some modest flowers which have escaped the notice of the Sages of Romanos. Turf tales and Boxing anecdotes have often a common inception. Invention has before now proved an aid to history. And Truth is not the only thing found at the bottom of a pint pot. With one eye, therefore, fixed on the Mysterious Goddess, and with the other ranging over the crowded Court, in which Boxers, Trainers, Bookmakers, Sharps and Flats continuously call for

a decision, we shall proceed to a judicial consideration of their claims. Our Court of Inquiry should at least promise a fair hearing. The judgment seat is situated in the National Sporting Club itself. The authority upon which we shall rely is the Club Record.

And yet not entirely. One may always have too much of a good thing. Accuracy itself may be too formal; and historians by confining themselves within limits too rigid have before now sent readers to sleep. This catastrophe we would at all hazards avoid. Though dealing with Boxing we have no desire to administer the Sleeping Draught. Our narrative, therefore, while taking for its mainstay the printed record of the Club's doings, will permit itself various deviations in the way of Anecdote, Biography, and Comment. But the anecdotes will not be the children of Imagination; the character sketches will not be drawn by those who have not seen the originals; the comments will not be the carpings of those unqualified to judge.

Nor, while we are thus busy in chronicling deeds and men which have figured prominently in recent history, shall we omit to make due mention of the Memories of the Past. The very foundations of the National Sporting Club are fixed on Sporting

History. The name of Evans will kindle contemporary recollection. Mention of the Cave of Harmony will raise earlier and half-forgotten ghosts —pugilistic many of them in a literary, dramatic, and musical sense—Boxers less anxious to inflict blows than Seats for benefits on their patrons, but all filled with that subtle atmosphere of the Market, through which this record of Sport and Sportsmen should wander, as in some Garden Enchanted.

Such then is the Bill of Fare which we set before our guests. Cooks, however, are not always infallible, as tourists have found; and the most elaborate culinary campaigns have failed through lack of a Kitchener. Success is not to be commanded in either literature or war. The most that can be done is to have a plan. Circumstance has placed this essential in our hands. The Club Record is open before us, and Facts are stubborn things. So far, therefore, as documentary evidence makes History the history of the National Sporting Club will be found not too austerely written. The secondary side of our scheme, the embellishment, the decoration, must rest its claim to success on the artificers. But it will be strange if something new in the way of Anecdote and Biography does not result from a collaboration carefully calculated, or

start into that life which is best kindled by congenial association. The Past is rich with memories. Many of these we hope to invoke. Boxers "only to be heard of" at Public Houses on the banks of the Styx! Referees no longer called upon to exercise earthly functions! Metallicians whose raucous tones have ceased to bawl any but Tartarean odds! A long array of Sportsmen past and present offer themselves for friendly review. At what fitter Temple can they claim a fugitive hour for shelter and reminiscence than The National Sporting Club?

PART I.

THE PAST

BEING

THE HISTORY OF THE CLUB HOUSE

FROM 1664 TO 1856

VIEW OF THE PRESENT CLUB HOUSE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Facing page 3

THE PAST

THOUGH the site of some Clubs are chosen by accident, no position could have been better selected than that of the N.S.C. for a temple dedicated to a National pastime. The history of Covent Garden has for over three centuries been a record of fashion and Sport. Nobody can tell very well what went on in a convent surrounded by a brick wall, though it belonged to the Abbot of Westminster; so that the Elizabethan history of the place may be passed over. But by the time Charles the First was King the Duke of Bedford had commenced the market buildings from the designs of Inigo Jones; Bishop Juxon, who attended the King to the scaffold, had consecrated the Church; and the date of 1636 was cut in a stone let into the brick-work of what is now the Club House. From this date the record of the neighbourhood as a seat of fashion may be said to begin. William Alexander, Earl of Sterling, was the first tenant of the Palace over which Mr. Bettinson now presides. He was followed by Thomas Killigrew, Denzil Hollis, and Sir Henry Vane. Till, by the time that Charles the Second had been two years on the throne, those Piazzas which now resound to the harmonies of the market gardeners sheltered

the houses of the nobility. Bow Street was the Bond Street of London, and mantuas floated up and down the pavements. At a little later period Mrs. Bracegirdle, the beautiful and celebrated actress, thus painted the atmosphere of fashion in an epilogue of Dryden's :—

> "I've had to-day a dozen billet-doux
> From Fops and Wits and Cits and Bow Street Beaux,
> Some from Whitehall, but from the Temple more,
> A Covent Garden porter brought me four."

Sir Walter Scott, commenting on this billet-doux from Bow Street, remarks "that it would now be rather alarming than flattering," and we shall notice this more judicial form of Bow Street compliment later on in the Club Record. Meanwhile the neighbourhood of Covent Garden no doubt shone very gay—Beaux in full flower! Perukes imitating extravagantly the flowing locks of youth! Spanish hats! clothes of slashed silk or velvet! roses in the shoes! Later on the Beau, when fully dressed, singularly enough wore his hat under his arm ; and in 1709 a lady who is nameless thus struck the neighbourhood with astonishment. In the following garb she took the Ring—I mean the pavement (if there was any): A black silk petticoat with a red and white calico border, cherry coloured stays trimmed with blue and silver, a red and dove coloured damask gown flowered with large trees, a yellow satin apron trimmed with white persian, muslin head clothes with crow-foot edging, double ruffles with fine edging, a black silk furbelowed scarf, and a spotted hood. It is to be doubted if anybody could have "got more on" if they had tried, and no doubt this aspirant attained the height of fashion.

But, as might be expected from a neighbourhood which was presently to be adorned by a Sporting Club, even at this early period Sport and fashion went hand in hand. So far back as the days of Charles the Second the Garden, as it was then called, had seen Professors and patrons at diversified exercises; Sedley haranguing an astonished crowd half naked on a balcony; Claude Duval the Highwayman being buried in the church; Buckingham strolling into what are now the Club premises to look at Sir Kenelm Digby's elaboratory; Pepys in the Piazza showing Lord Brounkers a ballad made by a seaman at sea (none other, indeed, than "To all you ladies now on land," sung afterwards at Evans's); Dryden being waylaid and beaten in the market by professional Bullies.

Sir Kenelm Digby—mentioned as one of the most celebrated tenants of what is now the home of English Boxing—was, as is well known, son of a Conspirator. His father, Sir Everard Digby, was a great swordsman, Sportsman, and breaker-in of what were called in those days "great horses." But youth and insidious advice entangled him in the Gunpowder Plot, and he was hung, drawn, and quartered at the West End of St. Paul's Cathedral. Sir Kenelm, the son, was a swordsman as his father was before him, but his proclivity towards the use of arms took a novel and singular departure. He invented a cure for a sword wound which might have interested some of our hypnotic suggesters, but would hardly meet with the approval of the professional Seconds in the National Sporting Club's Ring. Sir Kenelm's prescription was to anoint, not the wound, but the sword which had made it—a prescription which conjures up visions

of a boxing-glove being bathed with warm water and afterwards decorated with gold beetle skin. Sir Kenelm's cure was fashionable, however, in his own day. He at all events wrote several weighty treatises on it, meditated, no doubt, in the pleasant garden stretching northwards at the back of his house, which is now occupied by another sort of Magic Circle. I refer to the Ring. Besides this somewhat fantastic leaning to the Occult Arts, Sir Kenelm was busy as a foreign envoy and an amateur chemist. He married a very beautiful wife named Venetia, who he could not keep in order; a splendid portrait of him by Vandyke enriches the Royal Collection at Windsor; and he died, on what are now the Club premises, full of years and honours.

The house of this deceased celebrity came presently into the possession of another personality devoted to more active exercises. This was the Earl of Orford, better known as Admiral Russell. When he was ashore this personage presided at the Admiralty, and on a fleeting opportunity which he seized of going to sea he defeated Admiral de Tourville near La Hogue. This was in 1692. Four years later what is now the National Sporting Club became the scene of the first Cabinet Council, so called, ever held in England. And the Committee who so ably direct the Establishment's destinies in the Committee Room may reflect on this fact with mingled pride and emulation. It is described by Macaulay, who thus enlarges on an incident which links the Home of Boxing with the Nation's History. "One of the methods employed by the Whig Junto for the purpose of instituting and maintaining through all the ranks of the Whig party a discipline

never before known was a frequent holding of meetings of members of the House of Commons. Some of these meetings were numerous, others select. The larger were held at the Rose, the smaller at Russell's in Covent Garden."

The subject of one of these Cabinet Councils connects the history of the National Sporting Club premises with what is known as the Assassination Plot. The Piazza in Covent Garden, as has already been indicated, was a common meeting-ground for Sportsmen, prize-fighters, gamblers, and that ever-flourishing fraternity who find the delights of gaming fiercely beautiful. A certain three hours in the afternoon were devoted by these gentry to a stroll under cover along the market, in the course of which, by a species of transmutation known particularly to themselves, silver-hilted swords were converted into brass ones, and second-hand shoes stepped at once into Coaches. In the year 1696, however, when the first Cabinet Council was being held at Russell's, a Merchant of Other Wares made his presence felt. On Monday and Thursday nights a man made his appearance as regularly in the Piazza as if they were Settling days. So desirous was he of preserving his incognito that he had disguised himself so well that his most intimate friends wouldn't have known him had they not been advised to look out for a pedestrian with a white handkerchief hanging from his coat pocket. Not to prolong the mystery too unduly, this solitary promenader was not a Ready-money Bookmaker looking out for clients and anxious to avoid the police, but a Jacobite Agent named Sir George Barclay, who with the assistance of a Monk as a "Runner" had very soon put a formidable Con-

spiracy on foot. Among his clients were Charnock and Parsons, who soon after suffered those penalties at Tyburn apportioned for a political Crook which has been blown upon.

An atmosphere of Sport appropriate to the place continued to linger about 43, King Street, Covent Garden, during Russell's tenancy. Wharton, one of the Cabinet Councillors, had the finest stud of racehorses in England. His delight was to win plates from Tories. Sometimes, when in a distant County it was expected that the horse of a High Church Squire would have an easy task, down came on the very eve of the race Wharton's "Careless" (who had ceased to run at Newmarket merely for want of competitors), or Wharton's Gelding, for whom Louis XIV. had offered a thousand pistoles. Again, during Russell's tenancy of what is now the Club house, in 1698, he accompanied King William III. to one of the most splendid Spring meetings ever held at Newmarket. Tallard, the French Ambassador, accompanied the King. Half the Dukes in the Kingdom were present. Most of the Chief Ministers of State swelled the crowd. Montague stole two or three days from the Treasury. Godolphin, who had two years before resigned his great office at one of the Cabinet Councils held at Russell's, now found Newmarket heath a more congenial sphere for his activity. He was busy looking after his horses and his bets. On fine mornings there was hunting before racing. On rainy days the Cock-pit was encircled by Stars and blue ribbands.

So the Racing World went round when William the Third was King! It had, however, more than a century before been a royal pastime. There is

OLD COVENT GARDEN

Facing page 8

a record of a meeting held in 1585, not three miles from Salisbury, at which the then Earl of Cumberland won "the gold Bell valued at £50 and better" on the proviso that he was to bring it again next year—a promise which he made to the Mayor, and, I hope, kept. Racing, we have seen, was a popular sport in Charles II.'s time; and before his days Cromwell himself (forgive me, Mr. Hawke!) is reputed to have dabbled in the Turf. But though there were mighty Smiters in the land—witness the relics of that great Cavalry regiment which decided the days of Naseby and Marston Moor —blacksmiths and ploughmen then in many a country village—the Professional Boxer, as we understand him now, was an absent quantity. The Ring had yet to be born. And to after, though to not less animated, ages, belongs the credit of reviving an institution whose origin is lost in the twilight of fable, and whose most recent development can be seen for a reasonable fee on any Monday night at the National Sporting Club. To bridge the period till Boxing as an art finally asserted itself, we must leave the Seventeenth century behind us, and enter the "pudding days" of pig tails and square-bottomed coats. We must breathe the London of Hogarth, see the chairmen staggering under the Sedans, and hear the hoarse-voiced watchmen bawling out the hours of fine or rainy mornings. Then slowly through the crowds of faces made familiar by the genius of Fielding and his contemporaries looms out clearly the familiar features of Figg. He was perhaps the first of the Boxers; and before his time Prize-fighters were Cudgel Players generally. They were none the less anxious for patrons; patrolled

the Piazzas of Covent Garden on the look-out for watches or matches as assiduously as their later descendants. Their headquarters were not Hackney "with or without the 'ouses taken away," but curiously enough Hockley in the Hole; and here is a mistaken portrait of some of them as a clue to their demeanour which may well be presented before we leave the days of William the Third behind us for ever. Some of its features may be found not altogether unfamiliar in these days of Grace. "On the proclamation of James the Second's son as King" (that is to say in the year 1700) "some zealots who had probably swallowed too many bumpers, dressed themselves in coats bearing some resemblance to the tabards of heralds, rode through the streets, halted at some places, and muttered something which nobody could understand. It was at first supposed," writes Macaulay, "that they were merely a company of Prize Fighters from Hockley in the Hole, who had taken this way of advertising their performances with Back Sword, Sword and Buckler, and Simple Falchion."

The history of the Club House and its immediate neighbourhood again calls for attention. We left it in 1698 with Russell, the then owner, setting out with a cavalcade of Dukes and ambassadors for Newmarket. Seventy-five years later it was converted into an hotel by one David Low, and it was the first hotel in London. In that lapse of time its hospitable doors looked out on a long procession of all that was artistic, sporting, fashionable, and famous in the life of contemporary London. From what are now the Club steps might have been seen Wycherley's funeral; God-

frey Kneller, Court painter to five generations of Sovereigns, passing to his lodgings in the Piazza; Earl Ferrers already beginning that rackety life which was expiated in 1760 on the public scaffold for the murder of his servant; Lady Mary Wortley Montagu setting out for Bath to take the waters; Grinling Gibbons, Sculptor and Carver, borne to his grave; Foote, actor and Caricaturist, proceeding to his convivial chair at the Bedford Coffee House; Boswell seeking his first introduction to Johnson at 8, Russell Street; Garrick on his way to Drury Lane; Tiger Roach, the Bully of the Bedford, marching truculently to give some unsuspecting wight a hiding; Parson Ford staggering towards the Hummums to lend to a classic neighbourhood the additional glamour of a ghost story.

As the story is authenticated by Johnson, a note may be made here concerning its subject. The parson, who was a well-known figure in the neighbourhood, was a man of parts—very profligate, which was the fashion of his age, but not impious, which was not. In the course of time and a carouse he died at the Hummums. A waiter of the house who knew Ford well, had been absent at the time of the fatality, and returned to the hotel not knowing that Ford had died. Going downstairs to the cellar, however, he met him. Going down a second time he met him again. "What is Ford doing down there?" he asked when he came up. He was told that Ford had been dead some time. The recipient of this strange news immediately fell ill of a fever. And he lay in a parlous condition for some time. But when he had in some measure recovered from the shock, and was able to get about again, he said that he had a message to deliver to some

women from the deceased Parson. Nor was he able to rest till he had delivered this message. When he had delivered it, he had a strange story to tell. "I have delivered the message," he said, "and when I had given it, the women exclaimed, '*Then we are all Undone.*'"

After this it may prove comforting to get back to what is now the National Sporting Club, in its new guise as an Hotel. Its experience in this transformation began, as I have indicated, in 1773. The establishment was on a hospitable scale, with accommodation and stabling for a hundred noblemen and horses. But the new house of entertainment was soon to be witness of another tragedy. In Tavistock Street, Lord Sandwich first saw a pretty milliner called Miss Ray. The nobleman made her his mistress, and for some time all went as merrily as the proverbial marriage bell (which was, however, not rung upon the occasion). But in 1779 the affair ended, as so often happens, in a tragic consummation. As Miss Ray was leaving the door of Covent Garden Theatre, then exactly opposite the Bedford Coffee House, a disappointed suitor, named Hackman, suddenly showed his ominous face. In an instant, and before anybody could raise a hand for her defence, he shot Miss Ray dead with a pistol which he held concealed, and then made a not wholly successful attempt to turn the weapon upon himself. This cold-blooded murder made the sensation of the year. The murderer expiated his crime on the scaffold.

Five years later livelier scenes were to be witnessed from the new Hotel windows.

In the space between the Club steps and the Church, made memorable now by the crowded excitement of big Monday nights, and previously

From an engraving *by Hogarth.*

MORNING

Facing page 13

immortalised by Hogarth in his picture of "Night and Morning," the Hustings for the Westminster election were set up. It was an historic occasion. The Tory party were moving heaven and earth to exclude Charles James Fox. But the Demosthenes of English Oratory had on this occasion a more potent supporter than his own eloquence. Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, took upon her fair shoulders the task of beating up the outlying voters, with the assistance of a well-appointed carriage and a pair of the brightest eyes in the world. In the carriage she dragged voters to the poll whether they wished it or no; and at her eyes, a witty Irishman respectfully entreated to be allowed to light his pipe. A Butcher had already been kissed into liberal submission, and another Irishman's irresistible eloquence finally ensured the triumph of Fox. Sheridan spoke from the Hustings on this historic May day of 1784, and from Covent Garden a procession was formed which chaired the conqueror through the chief streets of Westminster to Carlton House. The intense feelings excited on this occasion, and which were in full view of the present Club windows, are thus summed up by a contemporary writer. "All minor interests were swallowed up in this struggle, which held not only the Capital, but the nation in suspense, while it rendered Covent Garden and its neighbourhood during three successive weeks a scene of Outrage and even of blood."

The phrase evokes the personality of The Boxer, who had now fully shown himself on the sporting horizon. Figg had long since set up his school and had his portrait taken; George the Third's eldest son was a frequent attendant at the side of the twenty-four-foot ring; Crawley Down and Blindley

Heath were becoming noted rendezvous for the exchange of manly compliments; and what is now known as the Noble Art was being elevated by the patronage of an entire nation to the dignity of an acknowledged science. Meanwhile Inigo Jones' Church was burnt down, and the Club's history continued to develope itself. From 1800 to 1805, what is now known as the National Sporting was called in the slang of the day "The Star," from the number of men of rank by whom it was frequented. It was no unusual thing for nine Dukes to dine there of a night, though no mention is made of an Earl. And to complete the harmony of the picture, at a house called the Finish, over the way, Tom Moore and Byron and Cribb, and other celebrities of the Book, the Ring, and the Road, made time fly with a convivial glass. Thus sings the poet of the party, of this classic haunt, then kept by a Mrs. Butler:—

> "Some place that's like 'The Finish,' lads,
> Where all your high pedestrian pads
> That have been up and out all night
> Running their rigs among the rattlers
> At morning meet, and honour bright
> Agree to share the blunt and tatters."

The Star now becomes Evans's Hotel, Supper Rooms, and Music Hall; The Boxer's broad shoulders appear in the Piazza, and the meridian of the Noble Art has dawned. The inner aspects of its history are laid bare in the pages of *Boxiana*. The prads may now be seen harnessing their tits for an early start for the place selected. The long line of carts, gigs, and barouches darkens the roads from the Metropolis to the Surrey Downs; kings and emperors crowd round the twenty-four-foot

ring, and the local colour of London is reflected in the pages of Tom and Jerry. Covent Garden has long ceased to be a residence of the nobility. The Game Chicken and the Gas Light man are household words, and if these may not be called the days of the men of mind, they were at least the days of Vittoria, and were presently to be those of Waterloo. With these changes in its surroundings, the character of the house we are describing also changed. The erstwhile town house of Sir Kenelm Digby, and the Admiral of the Fleet, passed by a transition perfectly natural into a noted Sporting Tavern, where fights were arranged, great wagers laid and paid, and the toils of a busy day rounded melodiously in a Cave of Harmony. Mr. W. C. Evans, of Covent Garden, had retired from the management of the place in 1844, and Mr. John Green became proprietor. The genius of Thackeray has immortalised some of the entertainments, and the pen which described the neighbourhood as "having something in its air which breathes of old books, old painters, and old authors, and as being a place beyond all other places one would choose in which to hear the chimes of midnight," has painted a scene in *The Newcomes* which will endure as long as the English language. The scene of that chapter in which the Colonel rebukes the disreputable artist is laid practically in the National Sporting Club. The New Hall was built in 1856 from designs by Mr. Finch Hill, and cost £5,000. Seconds invite competitors there now to a Magic Circle where seconds of another kind used to ask another kind of audience if they would come with them "o'er the downs so free." Glees have given way to gloves and Bishop has been deposed in favour of Bettinson.

But the Past has always a charm. Its charm is intensified in proportion to the changes of the Present. And these fugitive notes about an historic house have been collected in the belief that the zeal with which the present members of the National Sporting Club assemble at the ring-side to see their favourite champions strip themselves for a sport which must always be English, will not be diminished by such recollections as these—that the site of the present Ring was once occupied by a cottage tenanted by John Kemble and that Fanny Kemble was born there; or that Kemble's cottage occupied a plot of ground once dedicated to the garden of Sir Kenelm Digby.

PART II

THE PRESENT

BEING THE CLUB RECORD

FROM MARCH 5TH, 1891

TO MARCH 18TH, 1901

THE ENTRANCE HALL AND STAIRCASE

Facing page 1

THE PRESENT

A BRIEF CHRONICLE OF THE SHOWS

SEASON THE FIRST

FROM MARCH 5TH, 1891, TO MAY 31ST, 1892

THE history of the National Sporting Club dates from the 5th of March, 1891, when its doors were opened to the crowd of Sportsmen whose curiosity had long been whetted. Corinthian London was present. Before the serious business of the night inaugurated the long succession of Boxing Matches, whose record will now be traced, members and guests had full opportunity of admiring the fittings and adornments of the Temple of Sport newly dedicated to their pleasure. The Entrance Hall, decorated by its fine staircase, which formed part of the *Britannia*, 100 guns, flagship of Admiral Russell at the Battle of La Hogue in 1692, handsomely carved with Anchors, Ropes, etc., and the initials of Lord Orford, the title which, as we have shown in the previous chapter, Russell subsequently took; the large and comfortable Coffee Room, suggesting, in its discreet angle, its homely and harmonious furniture, its walls hung with sporting prints and portraits of

celebrities, something of the old-fashioned English comfort associated with the great hostelries of the road; the fine Billiard Room on the first floor, with tables by Burroughs and Watts (in time to be the scene of exciting competitions); further upstairs still, the large room known as "Old London" (an heir-loom from the defunct Falstaff), with its coloured sign-boards and picturesque reproductions of a past country life;—these and other features of the new premises, the electric lighting by H. F. Joel and Co., to say nothing of the Coffee Room's cheerful and well-appointed Bar, were the subjects of constant curiosity, till the signal was given to pass to the Theatre, and to the serious business of the night.

Expert opinion from all parts of the World has pronounced the Theatre of the National Sporting Club an ideal place for watching Boxing. The crowd on the opening night, accordingly, appreciated the unequalled view of the ring, obtainable from all parts of the house, as well as other accessories of decoration, which entitled the handsome saloon to the distinction it has gained. The act drop (in Telbin's best manner) did not come in for its deserved share in the general eulogy, for the same reason that the Spanish fleet could not be seen in Sheridan's play. In plain words, the curtain was raised. And in agreeable conformity to established custom the Press was allowed to sit upon the Stage. The Pleasure of inspection over, business began, and the scope of a programme, which consisted of a succession of contests between Amateurs and Professionals, was announced by Mr. John Fleming in his official capacity. The festive surroundings of an inaugural night suggested no

THE LATE MR. GOLDBERG
"THE SHIFTER"

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hint of the fatality which cut short a career of successful management, and the heavy responsibilities of a Caterer to a sporting Public pressed lightly on shoulders which seemed well able to bear them. The spirits of the Manager and the excitement of the crowd communicated itself to the Boxers. The best Amateur and Professional talent lost no time in getting together, and the successful series of capital exhibition spars came to a climax in the appearance of Frank Slavin and Charley Mitchell. The great contest with Jackson, which was to make the year's record memorable, lent interest to the appearance of the Australian; the shadow of Corbett had not yet fallen across the path of the English Champion. And if Slavin's capacities as a two-handed fighter, and Mitchell's pre-eminent qualities as a ring tactician, were veiled by a tendency which had recently enriched the National Character, "Spoof" is not exclusively confined to the Stage on First Nights. A dash of buffoonery added zest to the general high spirits. And the genial influence of the Bar assisted the movement as the fun waxed faster. The chimes of midnight produced at the same moment a speech and a personality. In a neat address the Secretary of the Club announced the reason of its existence. The sobriquet of the Shifter has clung to the memory of the late Mr. Goldberg, together with more stable attributes of worth. His genial eccentricities hid abilities of a marked order, which might have led him to distinctions other than he attained. In his case, however, Nature once more showed herself prodigal of her children. The constant practice of a buoyant Bohemianism diverted talent which might have found more

enduring use, and he became principally celebrated for his unfailing good nature, his constant contributions to the "Pinkest form of journalism," and a devotion so austere to the Cult of Bacchus that he was never known to have refused a drink. To say that he was the last of the Bohemians would be to suggest the extinction of a type which will live as long as Society. Mr. Goldberg was rather, to borrow an illustration from Masonry, a Past Master of his vivacious Lodge. In the undisturbed serenity with which he encountered difficulties, in his invariable high spirits, in his complete contempt for conventional hours (for him to go to bed at three in the afternoon and get up at four in the morning was all in the day's pleasure), he stands out from among feebler imitators a memorable figure. The Bohemianism native to his disposition must always find a congenial element in a Sporting Club. It was in the fitness of things, therefore, that his words of prophecy and admonition should have been heard at the opening night. Sportsmen who are good fellows should always have a comfortable glassful for his memory. Compelled abstainers may well spare him the passing tribute of a Milk and Soda.

The excitement of the Inauguration gave place to the serious business of the Session. In this initial contest Alf Suffolk was again to the fore. Mr. B. J. Angle presided as referee. The anxieties and responsibilities of this arduous post are well known. It suffices for the present to say that Mr. Angle has exercised his steady and judicial control in almost every contest of note which has taken place in the Club Theatre, and that the stalwart form, the heavy moustache, the deep voice

Photo by *Walery.*

MR. T. ANDERSON

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of the well-known ex-amateur, are memories inseparably associated with classic nights. In Mr. Angle's enforced absence (for life is not wholly made up of judging points) Mr. Tom Anderson decided that W. Reader had the advantage of William Baxter, when in consequence of the former's capacity for returning in bulldog fashion to the attack, Baxter had to strike his flag for the first time in his life. But Mr. Angle's arrival from the Ormonde Club was timely enough for him to hear the decision which he was not called upon to give.

On the following Monday a contest of great importance was decided at the newly opened Club, when W. Plimmer of Birmingham beat Jem Stevens of London. Plimmer was at this time Bantamweight Champion of England. He was in reality the predecessor of that celebrated Pedlar Palmer, whose prowess will be recorded many times later on in these pages. On this occasion he stripped a perfect model, and remaining cool and collected in the face of his opponent's determined efforts, he made Stevens hold out his hand just before the beginning of the sixteenth round, with the remark, "I can't see out of my left eye and it's no use going on." The winner's subsequent career in America is well known, where he made a wonderful name, and at 8 stone 4 lbs. carried all before him. But his victory at the National Sporting Club on this occasion is perhaps chiefly remarkable from the fact that his opponent's backer was the late celebrated Teddy Mills.

Memories are at once awakened of the great fight at Wadhurst between King and Heenan. Teddy Mills trained King for this encounter. He also remarked when it was over, "The money beat

Heenan, not King." As a pedestrian the late celebrity, amongst other feats, ran and beat the celebrated Deerfoot at ten miles. He was an all-round sportsman in every sense of the word, and as a companion a more genial little fellow never breathed.

The official voice of Mr. Angle was heard again in the ring at the next encounter, reminding two terribly anxious boxers that they were not engaged in a football match, and entreating them to break away. Inspirited by this advice Ted White (himself an ex-amateur champion) failed to crack, as his opponent's party had hoped; on the contrary he stayed on like a top and gained a decision from Welland, which was as well deserved as it was unexpected. A Smoking Concert agreeably diversified the round of entertainments on the 14th of July. The date marks a first departure in the Club programme, which has frequently been repeated with invariable success. The art of the Music Halls lent assistance to an earlier science, and the voices of Charles Godfrey and Eugene Stratton were heard discoursing of Patriotic and West Indian matters, where the only music hitherto faced has been that of the gloves. From his seat in the Chair Mr. W. Lowe invited the attention of a thoroughly amused audience to the literary exposition of George Beauchamp, and the union between boxing and letters was further cemented at the ensuing contest, in which Stanton Abbott got the better of W. Baxter after having served a seven years' noviciate in the publishing firm of W. H. Smith and Son. A most scientific and grandly contested match signalised this union of Literature and the Ring, and Mr. Fleming in the course of it made his first public protest from the Ring side against

the slightest remarks being made while contests were in progress.

A singular telegraphic despatch now interrupted the hitherto undeviating progress of the Entertainments. It ran as follows :—

"*Mare Street, Hackey,*
"*October* 19, 3.25.

"*Mr. Fleming, National Sporting Club.*

"*Wall has severely hurt his arm, won't be able to show, please postpone for a week.—Wall.*"

Like all bad news the above was put into Mr. Fleming's hands at the last moment. The prospect of an eagerly anticipated bout was seen to be in danger, and no messengers that Lars Porsena sent forth were despatched faster East, West, North, and South than the envoys of the N.S.C. were hurried in search of the stricken Boxer. A fevered hue and cry was rewarded; for "Hackey," Hackney was read; the expected Hospital resolved itself into a Public-house, and the cleverest boxer, pure and simple, that had been seen since Jem Mace was discovered disconsolately smoking a clay pipe. It is painful to have to say that nothing was the matter. The hurt arm proved a mere figure of pugilistic heraldry; but the suffering Boxer had already assumed a fighting attitude, and no blandishments could drag him from the Bar. He spoke in disdainful terms of the pleasures of boxing for a purse, and on being told that his reputation would suffer, replied with unaltered calm, "Then I'll go back to my work." The curtain falls on a dubious incident, to rise on a scene of expectations disappointed. Not since the opening night

had so large and varied a crowd assembled at Boxing's Head Centre. All London sporting circles were represented, to say nothing of the Country. Grave City Fathers lent a leaven to the scene; a batch of Colonials recalled the England over seas; and between representatives of the Turf, and wearers of the Wig and Gown, Members of Parliament watched the proceedings with a proper legislative lethargy. The ill news spread fast. Fleming announced the defection of Wall. Bobbett pluckily took the place of the Hackney invalid, and a thousand spectators sympathised with the management. Fortune, which should have rewarded Bobbett's gameness, averted her face, and two months afterwards her attitude remained the same when, in a thick fog which enveloped Mud Salad Market in Egyptian darkness, Wall's substitute had to strike his colours to "Husbands." £450 was given away for this exploit, and Fleming returned thanks for an overflowing patronage.

The year 1892 opened with the discomfiture of a clever veteran, the introduction of a lightweight Australian Boxer, and a Champion Club Swinger. Bill Cheese, by virtue of many past triumphs, had worthily earned the distinction of a nickname; and if "the Bit of Gorgonzola" went down before Ching Ghook, it was only a proof that age and youth can no more live together in the roped Ring than they can in Shakesperian verses. The Australian Champions were greeted by the Australian Leviathan and his brother, and in the welcome which Joe and Barney Thompson gave to Tom Williams and Tom Burrows at the ring side, was seen the natural sympathy between the

wielders of the Club, the four-ounce glove, and the Pencil. If while the Leviathan Bookmaker and his brother discoursed with their fellow-countrymen of men and matters, that engaging shower of leaflets advertising the advantages of the "Playful Double" ceased to strew the Club, attention was still sympathetically directed to Betting by contemplation of the "Big Four." Strengthened, doubtless, by this contact with Metallicians, the visitors soon showed their metal. On the same night on which McCarthy beat Ted White before eight hundred people, Burrows, "attired in a white jersey with black theatrical trunks," gave a most finished display of Club swinging; and Tom Williams, stripping a picture, upheld his Colonial reputation in one of the finest exhibition spars that could be seen. The promise shown by Australia on this occasion was not fulfilled when some six weeks after William Williams was beaten by Whatley. But ample amends were made on the night of May 2nd, when Williams (Christian name Tom) stopped the Englishman Hatcher in one round by such an exhibition of hard and rapid hitting as had not been previously seen at the Club.

The genial face of Mr. George Piesse, a well-known and popular member of the Club, was now seen to glow with satisfaction; the hospitality and interest which he had lavished on the Australian since his arrival in England were amply repaid; and the prognostications of John Dougharty, who had committed Williams to Mr. Piesse's care, were fully justified. The name of this prominent member of the Club must not be passed over casually. In the founding of the Institution he was indeed one of the first to help. And the interest which he

has always shown in Boxing went further even than this. The fact should never escape the memory of Sportsmen that Mr. Piesse, associated with Lord Lonsdale, was one of the first to give battle to the Authorities in the interests of the Noble Art. With the legal assistance of the late Lord Chief Justice of England—then Sir Charles Russell—in the case of McAuliffe and Slavin, he pluckily resisted an attempt to encroach on the Amusements of the Subject. And his exclamation that "I and Lord Lonsdale first made Boxing Competitions with four-ounce gloves legal" was no empty boast. An off night, if such a thing is possible at the National Sporting Club, in which Wrestling superseded Boxing, and a gentleman from the Grecian Archipelago put "paid" to the account of Drayton and Daniel, preceded W. Williams's contest with Whatley. And sandwiched between it and the successful début of Tom Williams must be chronicled the reappearance in England of the Redoubtable Sam Baxter. A two years' absence in the Antipodes had not been altogether marked with the white letters. The Pride of the Stock Exchange had experienced the bitters of illness and defeat, but the undoubtedly premier Boxer at his weight was now to show that his right hand had not lost all its cunning, and weaving into Joe Wilson in the eighth round he administered the "Sleeping Draught" amidst a scene of intense excitement. Some foreign names figured about this time in some pleasantly diversified programmes. Ham won a competition, Mr. A. H. Curnick (an ex-amateur champion) holding the Watch; Antonio Pierri discounted history by throwing Romilus in classic

MR. PIESSE.

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style; and at a special concert on a Saturday night Tito Mattei and Mademoiselle Antoinette Trebelli lent their invaluable aid. At the same entertainment Mr. F. Ffranchon Davies upheld the reputation of Wales as the birthplace of beautiful voices; while the presence of another Davies of another nationality, and a sterner sphere of action, made the night of May 16th memorable. This was the celebrated "Parson Davies," who encourages aspirants in another school than that of Divinity. Before the commencement of the fight between Tilley and Greenfield, in which the first-named proved the better man before a large audience of Town and Country members (to say nothing of foreign and Colonial), the burly and genial presence of the clerically-named promoter of pugilism loomed large at the Ring side. In reply to cries of "Speech, Davies, speech!" Parson Davies spoke these words as a prologue to some omens coming on, "We are here for Boxing, not Speech-making." The practical purport of his visit thus presaged, he went on to say, that Jim Hall was prepared to meet any man in England at the poundage, and that Joe Choynski was similarly ready and willing.

And now the long-looked-for 30th of May began to draw near, and the contest between Peter Jackson and Frank Slavin was the common topic of talk.

The details of this great battle and its preliminaries are fresh in the memories of all. The men had no sooner gone into training—Slavin at the Cliff Hotel, Dovercourt, under the care of his brother Jack, and Tom Burrows, the Club Swinger; and Jackson at Brighton, under the care

of Jem Young—than speculation became rife. From the outset Slavin expressed himself confident of the issue. Jackson's native modesty was tuned to a lower key. Immediately before repairing to his quarters, the black was the recipient of some farewell good wishes at a house of entertainment not a hundred miles from The Bodega in Glasshouse Street. Asked whether he thought he would beat Slavin, he contented himself with a quiet smile, and said, "He is a very good man. I shall do my best," and so departed to Brighton, unaccompanied by that excess of luggage in the shape of Advertisement, with which Boxers sometimes encumber themselves. Both men progressed satisfactorily through searching preparations, and when the eventful day dawned were pronounced as fit as hands could make them. The scenes of excitement which ushered in the fight between Sayers and Heenan have been described as not to be surpassed. The event of that day has secured a fixed place in the nation's history. But it will not be overstating the case to say that no fight between two big men has ever created a wider interest than the struggle between Jackson and Slavin. And no fight may be more worthily called Classic, in the truest acceptance of the term.

Opinion remained equally divided as to the chances of the two men. In London one of the best judges offered an even thousand on Jackson, but with a proviso. Slavin, however, had plenty of friends, who supported him with unabated confidence. The speculative fever of the Capital spread through the country, and the voice of the Layer was heard in the land. In the West of England, the sporting centre of Exeter discussed

PETER JACKSON

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the coming event all day, and a well-known commission agent closed a big book in the New London Hotel (after hours) at the very moment when the men entered the ring.

The scene in the theatre of the National Sporting Club was brilliant in the extreme. At the eleventh hour numbers were disappointed who were ready to pay any price for standing room. The enthusiasm of the spectators reminded old stagers of Evans's, and of the revelries celebrated on Boat Race night by the Rival Blues.

The details of every round in a glove contest, where the exchanges are necessarily fast, have been found tedious and are often contradictory. Those who were present at the meeting of Jackson with Slavin have all the striking incidents of that memorable event ineffaceably stamped on their memories. To those who were not so fortunate, the files of all the leading sporting papers in England and the British Museum are still open. Some vivid impressions by an expert eye-witness will here suffice. As soon as "time" was called, both men were very smart from their corners. It was clear that business was meant. Jackson crouched slightly, panther-like, alert, dangerous. Slavin's onslaughts were continuous and determined, but the Black's quickness, long reach, and wonderfully fine straight left, enabled him to more than hold his own. The punching may or may not have been terrific. But through the death-like stillness which reigned round the Ring, the blows were heard in the Club Saloon, and some say in Covent Garden.

The forcing tactics of Slavin were continued as the contest went on. An added energy may have

been lent to them from the fact that a bet had been booked that he would dispose of Jackson in four rounds. The bet was lost ; and yet before the men had retired to their corners for the sixth time, this defeat of the Black seemed for a moment to have been only antedated. Slavin's unceasing efforts by sheer bulldog pertinacity to work his opponent into a dangerous position seemed on the point of being rewarded. Jackson was seen against the ropes and apparently in trouble. The hopes of Slavin's followers ran high. But, with the skill and activity of a feather weight, Jackson ducked under the intended visitation, and in an instant the position of danger was shifted from one party to the other. Succeeding rounds showed Slavin still pursuing hurricane tactics, but Jackson always getting the best of the exchanges by the help of his long straight left. Early, however, in the round which was destined to be the last, Jackson at the end of some fast in-fighting "chipped" his antagonist on the jaw. The blow did not seem a decisive one to onlookers. Slavin did not fall ; but he was dazed and stood helpless in the left corner of the ring, by the referee. The brutality of boxing, which its designing detractors are never tired of proclaming, was now illustrated in a remarkable way. Experience has repeatedly shown that there is always a punch left in a big man even when he appears disabled. Dallying at such a crisis is dangerous. Jackson, however, turned round in a most chivalrous manner and looked at the referee. The rules of the game were beyond dispute. Mr. Angle said "Fight on." Saying "I must finish him, then," Jackson performed a distasteful duty in the most humane manner. Instead of setting about his

FRANK SLAVIN

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dazed but still dangerous opponent with all his might (according to the method invariably proclaimed in the *Great-Grandmother's Gazette*), Jackson administered a series of short left and right hook hits till Slavin gradually dropped on his knees. Jackson was proclaimed the winner, and the referee's announcement was received with great applause.

An interesting peep behind the scenes is now permitted. The victor was glad to find in his dressing-room a relief, however temporary, from a crowd of congratulating admirers. Adorned with honourable scars in the form of a slight cut over the left eye, he sat on a bed with his hands on his knees and smiled quietly at Mr. A. F. Bettinson who was in attendance. The following dialogue took place :—

Bettinson : "Are you hurt, Peter?"

Jackson : "No. Fine contest while it lasted, wasn't it?"

Bettinson : "Will you have a bath and stay here?"

Jackson : "No, thank you. I'd rather get home, so that I can have a bath and lie out. I feel a bit sore. But can't you get a bottle between our two selves?"

The suggested libation having been performed, members began to crowd upstairs on congratulation intent. Jackson before he left wished particularly to see Lord Lonsdale, to thank him for many kindnesses. This wish having been gratified the Black expressed a further desire to shake hands with "Paddy," as he called his late opponent. That warrior was accordingly visited, and was found lying in bed, attended by Tom Williams and Tom

Burrows. The words which passed at this memorable meeting are here preserved for posterity :—

Jackson : "Good night, Paddy. There can't be two winners, but good luck to you."

Slavin : "Good night, Peter."

Jackson then left the Club. His social intercourse with Mr. A. F. Bettinson was, however, only suspended for the moment. It was renewed with advantage on the Wednesday following, when he accompanied the present Manager of the N.S.C. to the Derby on the Club Coach, compared the merits of Epsom and Flemmington, to the disadvantage of the former resort, and set the seal on his disapproval by backing the winner of the big race. The Starting price of Sir Hugo was 40 to 1.

To return for a moment to Jackson's late opponent. A visit from Mr. Bettinson the first thing in the morning after the contest found Slavin reclined at his ease, while his faithful henchmen read aloud the reports of the overnight proceedings. Having listened grimly to various vivid and contradictory recitals of his discomfiture, the defeated Boxer delivered himself of this instructive comment :—

"They won't believe it in Melbourne. I suppose he must have clipped me on the jaw." No one offering any other explanation of the catastrophe, Slavin said that he would like to get down to Putney to see his "Missus," and having taken an honourable defeat in a very manly fashion he departed, much disfigured, in a four-wheel cab.

The last night of the National Sporting Club's first season had ended in a blaze of enthusiasm.

SEASON THE SECOND

FROM SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1892, TO JUNE 26TH, 1893

SO brilliant a close to the opening Season was followed in the nature of things by a slight set back. The now famous Monday nights began their second course on September 25th. A crowded audience saw Robinson get the better of Suffolk, and Locke won a competition at the subsequent entertainment. On October 10th, however, disappointment made its presence felt, and *Semper paratus* was proved to be a proper motto for the Club. Stanton Abbott was to have met Austin Gibbons (America), and widespread interest had been excited by the promised show. Our English climate, characterised by a witty Frenchman "as fit only for wild ducks," proved uncongenial to the representative of the States. A chill caught during training operations left lingering traces behind it, and Gibbons had at the last moment to indulge Abbott with a walk over. But the Management was, as always, ready, and a very alert substitute stepped into the vacant place. Mr. Fleming's announcement that Sam Baxter would box Abbott ten rounds for a century was received with loud cheers, which were renewed when "the Redoubtable One," who had been smoking cigarettes all day, obligingly "took the floor." He also took the

contest. Though the expected clip on the jaw did not come off, Sam Baxter's total want of condition did not prevent him from securing a verdict on a preponderance of less prominent points. The modest eloquence of Peter Jackson put a pleasant period to the night's delights. He expressed himself willing to spar Corbett or any man, and for the scene of conflict declared a preference, not more well founded than appreciated, for the Ring in whose centre he stood.

Monday nights meanwhile continued their uninterrupted course to varying issues. The victory of W. Corbett over Ted Mortimer was expected; the same may be said of Valentine's defeat of Phillips; but the discomfiture of Reuben Baxter by Sorrell was a blow to Backers, and the downfall of favourites was found to be an experience not confined to the Turf. The rivalry of Nations was resumed on December the 5th. Tom Burrows had come to this country from Australia, in the capacity of a trainer. His condition cast no reflection on his own art. But in the science more immediately in question, William Robinson showed himself the superior Boxer. Robinson hailed from Hackney. The instability of Wall was forgotten, and the drooping laurels of a classic suburb raised their dejected heads.

A splendid contest ushered in the New Year. It also introduced to the National Sporting Club an historic personality. A packed house watched the protracted struggle, in which Jim Stevens beat Bill Corbett. The victor well deserved the ovation which greeted his triumph; but the Chronicler must consider the presence of Jem Mace, who acted as Stevens' second, the memorable incident of the

JEM MACE

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evening. The sight of the brown skin, compact, alert figure and fine shoulders of the Retired Champion of the World, recalled memories of the palmy days of the Ring, when muffled-up Corinthians arrived at the Great Eastern terminus in the shuddering dawn; and had their faces recognised and their watches taken. Some present at the National Sporting Club remembered Mace's last fight with King, when Jem, with victory in his grasp and opening himself to deliver the *coup de grâce* to a tottering giant, got into a hollow in the ground and received such an extinguisher on the right side of the face as is generally read of only in romance. And yet this was not Mace's last encounter with King. History, secret but authentic, declares this to have taken place outside no more secluded a *venue* than Tattersall's. The stake was for a fiver (not forthcoming from King to Mace's cousin Pooley); the pavement did duty for the Ring; King rushed in as he had done on the Essex Marshes; Mace brought the right across; hansoms were requisitioned; and, however the decisions of the previous Referees may have been questioned, the verdict on this last fight was given by a Metropolitan magistrate. Since those days, Mace's well-known figure has been seen in every part of the Empire undertaking various rôles. Now shouting the odds on the Racecourse; now assuming the smile of Boniface; now entering fashionable watering-places, seated in a brake, while the Circus was being pitched in a neighbouring meadow, and the band played "See the Conquering Hero comes" for all it was worth. So little has age withered him that at the moment of writing he still takes the Ring; and so little has custom staled his

infinite variety that he not so long ago exhibited a new form of giving Boxing Lessons. The announcement of the World-known name made a School fashionable; the usual preliminaries were adjusted, twelve guineas were paid in advance, and pupils by the score hastened to put themselves under the hands of a Master of Defence. Violent delights have violent endings. The first lessons were brief, the enthusiasm of novices ran against a right hand, and the pupils reappeared after seven days, fully dressed if not in their right minds, and asked if on the occasion of their last visit they had come away without their hats. Rumour hundred-tongued, or the ubiquitous reporter, who has taken her place, have further busied themselves with Mace's strenuous career, but for the moment divergence must be made from so instructive a siding.

Boxers may stop, or be stopped, but the Ring at the National Sporting Club never stands empty. Ill fortune still dogged the footsteps of the Baxters, and on January 23rd the chastening experience of Reuben was shared by the redoubtable Sam. The audience which witnessed Sam's downfall was a remarkable one—even for a big night at headquarters. "Men of high degree, City men, West End men, and Members from the country" "twirled their moustaches"—but in spite of this encouragement to enterprise, Sam was unable to stretch out an active opponent, and the verdict on a scientific contest proclaimed Stanton Abbott the winner. The supremacy of Reading as a manufactory of biscuits was shown on the next Monday night not to extend to the making of Boxers. Startling reports of the capacities of Tom May had heralded his arrival from the biscuit town; but the proof of the

pudding was not found to be in the eating, when he succumbed pretty easily to Tilley. The night (it was February 27th) is made more memorable by the first appearance of a Boxer destined to figure with extreme prominence in the Club Record. The birth of new Comets does not at once attract the universal notice of Astrologers; the historic triumph of Edmund Kean's début was by no means unanimous. Byron's assiduity in securing a series of "second notices" established "the little man in the capes" as a fixed star; and when Mr. Fleming introduced the first pair to a crowded house, the general verdict on the now renowned Pedlar Palmer contented itself with the expression that (with Jim Collins for opponent) he had made a most creditable show. A natural capacity for boxing quite out of the common, and which had never needed a lesson, was to reveal itself with unmistakable force before the season closed. In the meanwhile Wallace forfeited to Hipkiss (the management as usual finding a substitute in a moment), Mendoza of Hackney, cursed with a moderate capacity and a classic name, failed to confirm the Jews' reputation as "mighty smiters"; and the night of the 6th of March was made noticeable by Ted White's defeat of Bowman, and by the first appearance before a notable audience of a jovial recruit from the Premier Service. Jerry Driscoll's claim to the championship of the Navy has been enhanced by conquests in a wider field. His name will recur in this record with a regularity suggestive of a disciplined apprenticeship, and whether victory or a harder lot has rewarded his efforts, he will never lose his reputation as an honest, determined, and hard-working boxer, who has penetrated even

to France for his experience. He has proved that the difficulties of the Savate may be dealt with, and has emerged unscarred from the more insidious assaults of French champagne. The indefatigable Ted White now added a further instalment to his laurels, and the following Monday (May 1) saw that second appearance of Pedlar Palmer which has already been forecast. W. Croot was his opponent. The first mention of this name arouses tragic memories. Croot was a clever, game, and thoroughly honest Boxer; but he was no match for the Midget from Canning Town, and a wonderful display of science and quickness proclaimed Pedlar to be a Nipper. Old Ring-siders recalled Peter Morris's invincibility with the knuckles, and drew parallels not unfavourable to the new professor with the gloves; and the world of Cricket assisted in hailing the rising of the New Star in the persons of Messrs. Lyons, Trott, Gregory, and Giffen, of the Australian Team.

The victory of Valentine over Overton was the precursor to a match which was expected to bring the Season to a memorable close, and to stand on its records only second to the meeting between Jackson and Slavin. The abilities of Jim Hall had been proclaimed by a reverend mouthpiece. Parson Davies had announced that Boxing and not talking was meant; and when his protégé and Slavin were matched for £1,000, expectation stood on tiptoe and Pencillers opened fresh books. If Hall and his party expressed a glowing confidence (which later events tinged with a browner shade), Jackson's redoubtable antagonist thought himself in for a soft job. He was understood notwithstanding to be sparing no pains in his preparation.

JIM HALL

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Hall at all events, when delivered into the hands of his seconds on the night of the 29th of May, was manifestly trained to the hour. Whether the time of day, or any more occult influence, had anything to do with Slavin's condition, remains a question for the curious. The scene at the Club about nine o'clock reminded those present of the big man's contest with Jackson, but the appearance of the runner-up on that occasion recalled a Latin quotation. "Quantum mutatus ab illo" was written round the portrait of his youth by the decrepit Wycherley. Slavin might have put the same motto on his colours with perfect propriety, for (Latin on one side) the fact that he was a perfectly different-looking man from the Slavin of the memorable Jackson contest was as clear to onlookers as anything could be. Surroundings lent their assistance in vain to an imminent farce. The house was nearly all "shirt front"; every branch of Sport was represented; Lord Lonsdale (who, in his many rôles of President of the Club, Arctic Explorer, Master of the Quorn when the turn-out of that classic pack was the admiration of hunting Europe, and patron of Boxing in that truest sense which will be exemplified later on, has won the admiration and esteem of everyone worthy of the name of sportsman) presented a specially manufactured gold watch to be used in timing, and acted as Umpire to Hall, Mr. Piesse performing the same duty for Slavin. A distinguished dramatic author occupied a seat in Hall's corner. All these auxiliaries proved unavailing figures in a foredestined fiasco. The light of other days made the ghost of a contest look more threadbare, and the management of the National Sporting Club deserved

the sympathy of true Sportsmen. The chill which this catastrophe of Champions had thrown over the Boxing world was pleasantly dispelled at subsequent entertainments. The winter of discontent was found unseasonable in the middle of June. On the 19th of the month warm work was once more in evidence when Dave Wallace stopped Mike McGough; and at a brilliant wind-up of the season on the 26th Jack McAuliffe and Martin Denny were introduced to the audience, and an interested spectator of the scene was present in the person of Peter Jackson.

JACK McAULIFFE

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SEASON THE THIRD

FROM OCTOBER 2ND, 1893, TO JUNE 25TH, 1894

THE sympathy of the National Sporting Club with all branches of sport was shown on the reopening night, when, after Jack Fitzpatrick had beaten Charles Tilley and Martin Denny had given an exhibition spar, Mr. Fleming introduced Tom Sullivan, the new champion sculler of England. The glories of our riverside supremacy having for some period located themselves on other shores, spectators looked with hope on the new aspirant. Memories of Kelly, Sadler, and Renforth are not entirely dead; the Putney towing-path may still re-echo to its ancient war-cry; and hope—even for English sculling—still springs eternal in the Bookmakers' breast pockets. Those of the genial proprietor of "The Green Man" at Edgware were subject probably to the suggested burgeoning, when a party of N.S.C. members journeyed to those well-known training quarters, to see how Walter Eyles was going on in his preparation for his contest with Winters. The outing was tinged with a proper Corinthian tone. The Club coach was requisitioned. October obliged with one of its crispest days. The run to Edgware was soon made, and the Boxer, being an Englishman, was found doing what was expected.

The allusion recalls a story of the battle of Trafalgar. The celebrated signal which has made the hearts of generations of Englishmen beat higher was only flown from the *Victory's* masthead after considerable discussion. Nelson had meditated several other messages to his fleet before he finally displayed that Invocation to Battle which has become immortal. Nor when the signal, "England expects every man to do his duty" *was* displayed, did it meet with that spontaneous approval of the seamen which has been attributed to them. They seemed to see doubt lingering in their Admiral's mind. And one of them thus expressed their views :—

"Wot! does the old —— think we're not a-going to do it?"

To return to "The Green Man." The mysteries of "doch an dorris" were not omitted from the ceremony of a leisurely departure, and the journey back to town was enlivened by prophecy and reminiscence. The downfall of three warm favourites had marked the Club's last show. But on October 16th Eyles returned his recent visitors' call by repaying them for their investments, and well seconded by Arthur Wilkinson, deprived Dummy Winters (Australia) of £50 and a purse. Mr. J. H. Cousins acted as referee on this occasion, and Mr. W. Foxton held the watch. The Committee of the Club immediately after held a meeting. Closed doors shrouded the deliberations of the Covent Garden Senate, but it subsequently transpired that it had been decided nem. con. to offer the Club arena to Corbett and Mitchell. Some effervescing gasconades, due to a too frothing welcome, compelled an altered

"THE GREEN MAN," EDGWARE

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decision. Corbett, who had been punching the Ball at Drury Lane in a Melodrama, conceived himself to be a windbag. He spoke words in character. And America properly became the scene of the combat. But do not let us forestall history (as the Irishman said when he sowed Hemp). On October 30th Martin Denny avenged the defeat Australia had recently undergone in the person of Dummy Winters by beating Joe Lambert for £100; and brisk work made a short night's sport on the following Monday. True to his name, the Londoner Sparrow wanted a lot of catching, and Brompton was not quick enough for the task; but in a preliminary spar betweeen two Amateurs one of them showed an even greater alacrity than Sparrow, in keeping clear of his opponent's hands. A method so novel deserves notice. On Mr. Fleming informing the combatants that a little more ardour must be shown or they must leave the Ring, the champion in question said, "Then I'll leave it now," and suited the action to the words. The voices of Mr. Rutland Barrington, Templar Saxe, and Mr. W. H. Noel (an especial favourite) now lent attraction to another Club Concert, and during four six-round contests, which formed the feature of the subsequent entertainment, the voice of a well-known bookmaker was heard calling out something different to odds. Mr. Jack Percival on this occasion held the watch. The ruddy face, the venerable hair, the alert manner, and the cheery voice of this well-known member of the Club who wears his seventy (?) years as lightly as a doubtful check, complete a personality which beams reproach at degenerate days and recalls the portraits of a Sporting Past. Mr. Percival's transactions as a

layer have been as wide as they have been respected. The labours of calculation have not bowed this benefactor of our "Boys." He looks like the rosy embodiment of a Satisfactory Settling. And if he holds original views on the Chronology of English History (it has been hinted that he once credited Oliver Cromwell with having forced King John to settle over the Magna Charta) he was quite in his element keeping time at the Ring side.

Few of the Classic contests (old style) escaped Mr. Percival's interested attention. Many departed pugilists looked to him for the office, and as on the occasion under notice he watched the batch of débutants at the National Sporting Club in his official capacity his thoughts may have reverted to many and more memorable scenes—to a certain Ring pitched at Wadhurst, for instance, on an occasion of sterner strife, when, in a contest between giants which ought never to have been doubtful, Heenan sucked the sponge offered him by his second, and at once beat the air instead of Tom King. No such unpleasing element of dubiety marked F. Godbold's defeat by Stocker of Islington, on the night of December the 4th. It was only after a grand contest that the ex-amateur champion went under. Cock Robin "stood off" Tom Williams of Australia, and the declaration of a draw paved the way to Mr. Fleming's complimentary night. A billiard match between D. Richards and J. P. Mannock set the ball rolling. The supremacy of two ex-amateurs was contested by Messrs. A. Diamond and H. King; and Army and Navy exchanged sounding salutes in the persons of Collins (land) and Driscoll (sea).

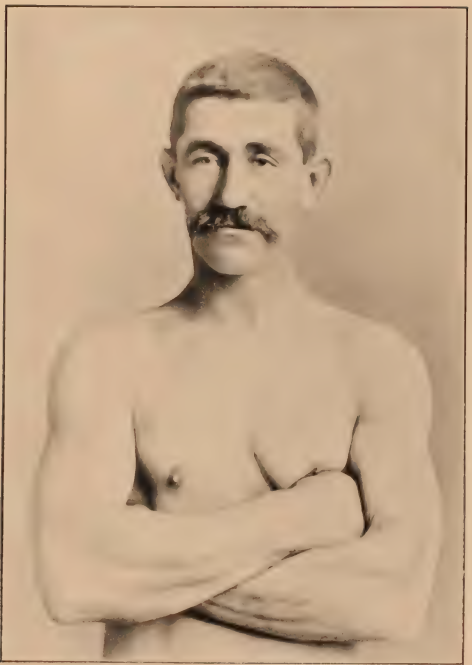

Photo by *Fred. T. Palmer, Ramsgate.*

JERRY DRISCOLL

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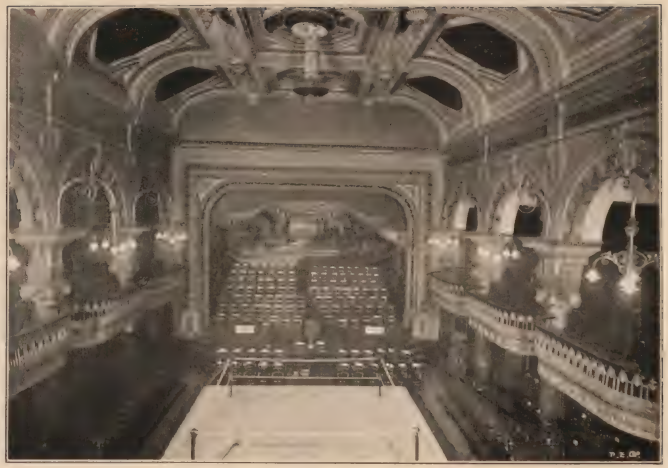

THE THEATRE OF THE NATIONAL SPORTING CLUB, WITH THE RING

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If the Advertising form of Charity is said by some to be in our midst, no such stigma clings to the subscriptions to the *Referee* Children's Dinner Fund. The Club's concert on behalf of this admirable charity has become an annual institution, It was supported this year by the usual number of distinguished artists, industrious even after their night's work, and giving their services gratis. Mr. J. Morris stage managed; Messrs. Eugene Stratton, Harrison, Brookbank, and Aynsley Cook sacrificed to the Muses of Dance or Song; Mr. James Fernandez discoursed on the Bishop and the Caterpillar; Mr. Brandon Thomas and Mr. Cyril Maude (unconfronted as yet by the spectres of Charley's Aunt and Haymarket management) obliged with a recitation, and Mr. J. S. Shine assisted the science of Elective Affinity by a Polygot Love Song. Arthur Roberts remained Arthur Roberts, and Miss Cissie Loftus in her imitative capacity was everybody but herself.

Billiards is again the cry, and Professional Billiards too. From January 9th to January 14th the splendid Theatre attached to the N.S.C. was placed at the disposal of the Association, and Mitchell and Dawson played for £200, the Cup, and the Spot-barred Championship. The event ended in the victory of Mitchell, and Mr. G. T. Dunning (appointed by the Editor of the *Sportsman*) acted as Referee.

A note on professionals' peculiarities may be proffered. No action for libel will lie in the statement that as a Billiard player Dawson is of a calculating disposition. Profusion has no charms for him; and if he watches the ball keenly, he averts his eyes also from the Bowl. Mitchell is of a more dashing and

sanguine temperament. On the occasion in question these qualities soon gave him a strong lead; but they also necessitated, it would seem, constant visits to the Temple of Washing of Hands, and as these visits increased in frequency his score began to stand still. Filled with alarmed curiosity, Mitchell's principal backer repaired himself to his protégé's shrine. He found that Mitchell's Harbour of Refuge also sheltered some bottles of port. Libations, ablutions, and miss-hits now ceased at the same moment, and the Yorkshireman, showing his usual gameness when it came to the pinch, won the game without further help from doubtful auxiliaries.

With the table cleared, the Ring re-pitched, and Monday nights once more in full swing, a sad and philosophic truth was made evident. Every man meets his Climax. So a triumphant Boxer epitomised Fortune's fickleness to W. A. Gavin (a buoyant member of the Club, of whom more by-and-by), and so Diamond found when he met White in the first contest of the New Year. The ex-amateur, who hails from Birmingham, has been Light Weight and Heavy Weight Amateur Champion, and who has beaten numberless good men, amongst them Murray (H.W.C.), had not previously tasted defeat.

This is a sensation which all Boxers shun, but which they most of them feel sooner or later at the Unexpected point. Diamond, however, was not knocked out; he succumbed scientifically to a man stronger than himself. A "Cast Iron Man" had previously decorated the scene in the person of Jim Burge, of Australia, and during the evening the voice of Mr. Fleming was heard rebuking a Corinthian from South Kensington, who strangely

enough cried out for "More *Gore.*" The anniversary of Charles I.'s execution caused A. Hughes to lose his head, and when he succumbed in the most unexpected manner to Bert Bolton, a hot favourite went down. The defeated man had gained a great reputation from an initial encounter at Habbijams. The footsteps of history are again stayed at the beck of Anecdote and the mention of a venerable name. Habbijams' School for Neophytes is well known. Its director's experience of a Partnership have not been recorded, nor that summary method of dissolving the same by which he outpaced the slow limbs of the Law. Tradition tells that Habbijam took as his partner one Shah Horne. A brass plate inscribed with the two names decorated the door of the famous establishment.

"A Contest" took place, and on the Junior Partner devolved the duty of taking the money. He took it. But on the following morning £30 was not forthcoming. Shah (the fierce light of unusual responsibility having made him blind to the world) had not the least idea where the £30 was. It was probably in some Persian Harem. He was asked to fetch it. But while he was still on the quest of this Golden Fleece, a mysterious individual called Hedgehog (by reason of his spiky hair) was ordered to be ready with a screwdriver. On the reappearance of Shah, not bringing the shekels with him, a silent signal from Habbijam set Hedgehog to work on the Brass Plate. It was detached. It was cast into the street, and a new method of dissolving business combinations was signalled by these ever memorable words, "That ends the —— Partnership!" To leave Law still further behind us, and return to the N.S.C., the month of

February was noticeable for an interesting series of minor competitions, and for a bloodless victory for Pedlar Palmer, who walked over to W. Mortimer on the 19th in the presence of seven hundred spectators. Doctor Orton and W. Foxton judged a competition on the last day but one of the month, and in the early weeks of March, Croot got the better of Wood, and Driscoll added to his laurels. The sailor's victorious reappearance was properly followed by the spectacle of the Scots and Grenadier Guards battling for trophies, while Sir George Chetwynd relieved the flow of racing Recollections, and the eulogy of Jockeys, by complimenting Boxing soldiers, and presenting the winner with the Gold Cup. When the King is invisible, the next best person to see is the Grand Vizier, and though James John Corbett did not grace the festivities of April the 2nd, when Ingram beat Carter, his Manager, Mr. W. A. Bradey, and his assistant, Mr. E. Thurlaer, occupied seats. Eyles now beat Butler. On the succeeding Monday, Bill Roberts did the same for Bert Bolton, and the Honourable W. E. Cavendish was timekeeper, and Mr. E. Dettmer held the watch for a preceding competition. April 23rd provided a brilliant night. J. O'Brien, of Cardiff, met David St. John, of Resolven. The lads from mountainous little Wales provided grand sport. But the memories of the evening lie shadowed in the gloom of recent events. The acclamations of the Ring side are hushed by the sound of a Nation mourning, and the death-roll of Belmont claims David St. John as one of the bravest of her fallen sons. This fine young fellow (who in a subsequent spar with Peter Jackson on December 3rd, 1894, made Slavin's conqueror look

Photo by *Walery*

SIR GEORGE CHETWYND

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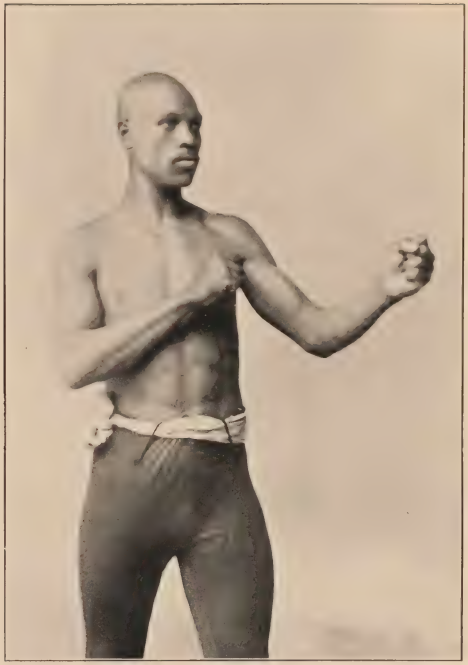
small in physique) was with his regiment, the Grenadier Guards, on November 23rd, 1899. In that final assault on the Kopje which decided the fortunes of the day, David St. John was confronted with one of the enemy who was as big a man as himself. The two giants fought hand to hand. The Guardsman used his bayonet with such force that he drove it right over the hilt and cross guard. To extricate it was impossible, and while David St. John stood thus practically defenceless, he was shot through the temple by another of the enemy, and fell dead on the body of his victim. If, therefore, Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, the National Sporting Club may be said to have contributed to one of the victories of the Transvaal War.

A military centre supplied our representative in an ensuing International Contest. Ingram hailed from Woolwich, and if Denny (Australia) gained the decision, it was only after a display of tactics which were anything but favourably received. Unbroken harmony however reigned on the evening of the 7th of May. The entertainment may be registered among the Club's grand nights. The object was worthy, and Mr. A. F. Bettinson had a bumper. The contest between Fred Johnson and Dave Wallace proved an unusually exciting one, and after Johnson had been declared victor, the following Amateurs and Professionals successively contributed spars: Mr. W. Campbell (Amateur L.W.C., 1893–4) and Tom Williams; Mr. S. Sykes (Amateur M.W.C., 1889) and Jerry Driscoll; Mr. J. Steers (Amateur M. and H.W.C., 1890–3) and Mr. R. Hair (Amateur M.W., 1887–8).

Allusion has already been made to the Sittings of the Senate who direct the destinies of the house in Covent Garden. They are rightly of a private nature. But a new departure in privacy was made on May 15th, when two prominent members and some distinguished Sportsmen gave a private display. Etiquette forbids the curtain to be wholly raised on this solemnity. But a peep beneath the green baize is permitted even in Pantomime, and a glimpse is caught of Mr. F. Hollis (Belsize) and Professor Alec Roberts, indulging in a scientific display. As one of the results possibly of the above-mentioned conclave, a public announcement was now made that the N.S.C. offered a £3,000 purse for the Corbett and Jackson contest, provided that the match was decided during the current year. The approaching close of the season was fitly marked on June 4th by two great glove contests. Martin Denny (Australia) beat Bill Eyles for £300, and W. Smith beat John Ryan for a like stake. The calculations of the Management on a big attendance were evidenced by additional rows of seats, and were justified by a crowd which filled ground floor, balcony, and stage, till there was no standing room. A patronage almost as extensive was accorded to the programme on June 24th, when Mr. Fleming introduced George Corfield, of Sheffield. And the collapse of Bill Mortimer after five rounds, credited the last night of the third season with another victory of Pedlar Palmer's.



By kind permission of FRANK CRAIG *"The Mirror of Life."*

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SEASON THE FOURTH

From October 8th, 1894, to May 27th, 1895

IF the descent of man is a fashionable speculation, the question of Pedigree is a frequent topic at a Sporting Club. The members of the N.S.C. had a singular problem of heredity put before their notice on the night of October 8th. The question at issue was, what degree of boxing excellence might be expected in a débutant whose mother was an American Indian and whose father was a Cuban negro. Frank Craig (widely known as the Coffee Cooler) answered it in person by decisively beating John O'Brien and taking £150. This new recruit to a formidable array of Sleep-inducing Magicians was found to be also the possessor of milder social gifts. Craig is indeed an accomplished fellow. He speaks English, Spanish, and German, is a good swimmer, bicycle rider and roller skater; and he gave a further proof of versatility on the night of Palmer's victory over Stanton, by stepping into the ring, obliging with a dance, and playing on the mouth-organ. The downfall of favourites on Competition nights is not an unusual experience. But the 22nd of October saw the judge's duty performed by a now deceased Millionaire. If these products of an overcrowded Civilisation are often found out of place (though

there is room yet in Park Lane), the late Mr. Barney Barnato was a man who was at home in all company. The glamour radiating from overpowering possessions hid in his case not a protuberant aloofness, but many of those endearing qualities which go to make up what we call a character. Barnato was never ashamed of that lowly origin which has given its Wolseys to history. An experience of life exceptionally varied had been scrupulously turned to account. His capacity for being a different man to different people, was the result of a certain histrionic bent in his disposition, acting on a wide knowledge of the world. Barnato had been everything by turns during that chrysalis stage from which he developed into a Crœsus. He could swallow red-hot pokers; he could make a Book; he would give his own rendering of the dream scene in *The Bells*. And his own acquaintance with these varied arts made him a sympathetic listener to the plaints of penurious Professors. Hence many gold seekers were deceived. The artist underlay the Millionaire; but a shrewd business brain presided over both, and Barnato was enabled by this combination to enjoy the pleasures of Bohemia without suffering unduly from the rapacity of its Priests. He was not a close-fisted man. On occasions he was a generous giver. But his own uncommon experience saved him from professional profuseness, and it enabled him to view, without damage to himself—and indeed with an amused and tolerant philosophy—the mendacious maunderings of the ambitious actor and the limpet-like adhesions of the predatory littérateur.

A many-sided yet keen interest in Sport made him, apart from his wealth, a prominent figure at

THE LATE MR. BARNEY BARNATO

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the Club. His constant attendance on big nights was accompanied by some large offers, when it became a question of odds. He offered to lay £1,000 to £800 on Jackson against any man in the world. The performances of his racing stud were followed by interested hangers-on, with varying feelings of exultation, amazement and collapse. He was owner of a superlative pair of trotters, who in a match with the "Duke's Motto" (with "The Bear" at Esher for rendezvous) made that genial penciller look for a light to see which way they had gone; and he was as regular in his attendance at first nights as he was at his place of business. Finally, to conclude a brief survey of a remarkable man, some singular contradictions showed themselves in Barney Barnato. He was a fair Jew. His long view of business prospects was accompanied by an extreme physical short sight. An ardent supporter of Boxers, he was, strangely enough, never known himself to have put on the gloves. A lifelong ambition to shine as a playwright left a play unfinished. He habitually eschewed Sauces, yet the best racehorse he ever owned was Worcester.

The Aldershot contingent showed in great force on Monday, October 29th, when Tom Williams (Australia) met J. Boyle. The Australian had come to be looked upon as one of the garrison town. A knowledge of his boxing prowess gave confidence to local lights, and the military, with Colonel G. M. Fox at their head, put their money down like men, and took it up again.

The name of Colonel G. M. Fox must always be held in respect by all real admirers of the Noble Art. Not only was he one of the ablest Inspectors

of Gymnasia that Aldershot has seen, but he may be said to have practically introduced Boxing into the Army. He was indeed a devotee who not only worked unceasingly, but most generously expended his own means in furtherance of the Sport. A visit to Aldershot while the management of Athletics was in his hands was a pleasant pugilistic pilgrimage, and to his influence may be directly traced the rings which were pitched under the heights of Magersfontein and Storkestroom, when "set to's" with the gloves relieved the tedium of inaction and effaced the recollections of defeat. Boxing was not looked upon with disfavour by the Authorities on these occasions—perhaps because the Authorities here were engaged in more manly work than pertinaciously poking their noses into people's private business.

To revert to the Contest at the N.S.C. Two rounds were sufficient to show Williams's superiority, and the "Colonial Coiner" led the congratulations. Other Australians, not unconnected with the Currency, acted as chorus; Joe Harris and Barney Thompson were seen actively paying out, and in response to a member anxious to back a man against Williams at 9 stone 8 lbs., the voice of the Australian Leviathan was heard commenting, "Why don't you make it seven stone six pounds?" The matter ended in smoke. A similar atmosphere prevailed four nights afterwards, when Mr. Sydney Jousiffe presided at the dinner and smoking concert. On his right sat Mr. Archer, on his left Mr. H. J. Homer. The popping of corks marked the disappearance of Magnums of Rittcher. Harry Paulton delivered himself of an excellent stump speech. Fred Storey and E. J. Lonnen helped to

COLONEL G. M. FOX

INSPECTOR OF GYMNASIA

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keep the company in high spirits. Spirits of another kind lent fuel to Oratory. Speeches were the order of the night.

The same stream of tendency was observable on the 5th of November, when Butler beat Jack Farley. Peter Jackson was the orator on this occasion. He was given a great reception, which he acknowledged with a gentlemanly ease worthy of that namesake of his whom Byron in the zenith of his fame was delighted to honour, and he spoke as nearly as possible as follows:—

"Gentlemen, I have boxed in the National Sporting Club before, and I did my best, and I shall try my utmost to win again if ever I am called upon to take the Ring. I know I shall get fair play at the National." With the bow of a courtier the peroration was now reached. "I thank you," said Jackson, "and, Gentlemen, I bar no one!"

The applause which greeted the celebrated pugilist having subsided, a Bulldog appropriately appeared. Champion Guido was exhibited on the stage by his owner, Mr. J. H. Ellis, himself an ex-amateur feather weight, and one of the best all-round sportsmen and good fellows.

The interval between this entertainment and December the 7th was filled by the usual succession of interesting contests. Driscoll beat Dick Moore (Minneapolis). Peter Jackson sparred with David St. John (looking smaller by the side of the Welshman). Mr. Sydney Fry was among the challengers at the Amateur Billiard competition, and the leading Sporting Journal pronounced the National Sporting Club to be "England's premier fistic Arena." Mirth and Jollity was again the order of the night on December 7th, when another

House dinner introduces another personality. Colonel North presided. His genial presence remains connected in the public mind with race-horses, greyhounds, Electioneering speeches, and other forms of indiscriminate charity. He once brought his celebrated dog Fullerton to the Club. On the occasion under notice he was accompanied by a graver form of champion. "On the joyous Colonel's right hand sat a reverend gentleman." Mirth held its sides all the same. The chairman first of all addressed the gentleman on his right hand, and then the gentleman on his left hand, and then reversed the order, while a well-known entertainer, after vainly attempting a recitation, sat on the stage smoking a cigar. The Colonel, however, was full of fight. The Anti-gambling League was the object of lively sallies, mingled with the reminiscences of youth. The audience heard with interest that the Speaker's fortune had been made by £20, with which he had landed in America, and shared his wonder as to why he could not dispose of it as he pleased, without the parochial interference of a self-constituted body. Songs were now the order of the night, and Mrs. Chant, though expected, did not appear.

On December the 10th Marlow beat Roberts, and at Mr. John Fleming's Annual Benefit Mr. B. J. Angle reappeared in the Ring. In a spar with Coddy Middings the ex-amateur showed that he had lost little of his cunning. Mr. George Sykes had the honour of putting on the gloves with Peter Jackson, and Mr. Fleming, with a view of giving his patrons a flavour of good things to follow, introduced Tom Williams (Australia) and Dick Burge (Newcastle) as Boxers who would meet

THE LATE COLONEL NORTH

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Photo by *Walery*

MR. H. HOMER

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each other in the coming year for a substantial stake. The meeting advertised took place on January 23rd (the Annual *Referee* Children's Concert preceding it, at which Antoinette Sterling sang, Florence Levy danced, and two original pictures by Phil May were sold by auction) and excited an interest not surpassed since Jackson and Slavin took the Ring. By nine o'clock not a seat was to be had; the cry was "still they come," and a well-known owner of racehorses bet 200 to 100 three times on Burge.

One more added marked the number of rounds in the contest, and the surprise excited by Burge's ready victory was extended to the sight of Jem Carney sitting in his corner. A hatchet was seen to have been buried. At the ensuing Club dinner Mr. Homer was seen in the Chair. Festivals of this nature are very much alike, but Mr. Homer's presidential appearance rightly evoked a rhapsody. "With a smile for everyone" (thus sings the *Sportsman*), a disposition more than genial, and a temper difficult to ruffle, he is indeed a welcome acquaintance." The Benefit for the Charing Cross Hospital may now be noted. It took place on February 22nd, after the usual intervening number of Mondays, and its form was naturally that of an Assault at Arms. Parallel bars showed the skill of Sergeant-Major W. Palmer; in sabre *v.* sabre the same expert, with the assistance of Sergeant Hendry, introduced the new style accepted by the British Government; Pedlar Palmer sparred with W. Croot, and Alec Roberts wound up with Burge in the absence of Jem Mace (indisposed). The excellence of the programme and the worthiness of its object call attention to

the Committee, and the name of Mr. H. Macevoy claims more than passing comment. One of the most prominent members of the Club, the divers calls of Sport and Charity never appeal to him in vain, and his unique racing experience has acquired an international tinge under the ducal shadow of Chantilly. The pleasant land of France, however, is associated in Mr. Macevoy's recollections with memories more exciting than those of the racecourse, and with the hoisting of other than "advance flags." The catastrophe of Sedan kept him a philosophic prisoner within the iron ring which Germany drew round Paris, and business responsibilities made him an unwilling spectator of the orgies which closed the reign of the Commune. A privileged Club circle may have the full horrors of war brought before them in Mr. Macevoy's moments of graphic reminiscence. His hands have been forced on the straining ropes which brought down the Vendôme Column; his eyes have seen husband and wife shot like beasts on the very steps of the Madeleine; his quick perception of an opening, and his capacity for rapidly calculating odds, have guided him through cordons of drunken French sentries, and of more suspicious though not less drunken police—at a time when the Centre of Civilisation was turned into an arena in which madness took France by the throat, and into boulevards running blood, over which Paris flamed.

A return to the National Sporting Club records is pacific after this, and is accompanied by recollections quite cosy. Bill Norton succumbed to Ernie Stanton on March 11th, in spite of many useful hints learnt at an historic East End Hostelry.

The "Blue Anchor," Shoreditch, has of late years come to be known as Tom Symond's house, and as such its famed ring has been the trial ground of many champions. Earlier associations connect it with the golden age of fighting history. A visit to the house reopens the pages of *Boxiana*, and its time-mellowed walls, its comfortable corners, its quaint staircases, and its gallery of pugilists departed, still seem to echo the proprietary tread of Bill Richardson. After Daly (America) had added to a rather humiliating series of international defeats by proving a better man than Harris, W. Butler beat Jim Thompson (ten rounds), and Ireland, by gaining a competition, set an example which was not followed by some compatriots numbered among the Brigade of Guards. This ex-annual function for encouraging the fighting qualities of our regulars took place on the 2nd of April, when that part of the Theatre usually occupied by the Press was packed by Privates, and many military men of high rank were seen in the rest of the house. The question of Home Rule would soon be settled if it depended on Ireland winning competitions.

Another was added to a growing account on Monday, May the 13th, and the evening was made further memorable by the exhibition of another science of defence, seen then for the first time at the National Sporting Club. A display with the foils was given in masterly fashion by MM. Fodor and Rabrossy, the celebrated professors of Fencing in the University of Buda-Pesth; and attention was called to an exercise which, in its capacity for making the body supple, has been found an aid in Boxing. Something French in its nature,

however, seems to bar its progress as a National Pastime, although everything that can be said about it, including (young MacPherson barred) a lament for Professors, has been said well by Mr. Godfrey Pearce in *The House on Sport*. The close of a full and varied season took place on May 27th, when Billy Plimmer beat George Corfield for £800, in spite of the solemn adjurations of a Sheffielder supposed to be deceasing to a local Salvationist! Questioned about Wedding garments, he replied, "Put your shirt on Garge." Seven rounds sufficed to show that this touching confidence was misplaced. Other evidences of the vitality of Sport were apparent in the course of the evening. The attendance was phenomenally large; the amount of shirt-front in evidence recalled the Stalls of a West End Theatre. Magistrates, Men of Letters, African diamond merchants, and members of the Bar sat side by side. After the contest Mr. Fleming announced that a member was willing to back Pedlar Palmer against the winner. And before the contest the presence in the weighing-room of Mr. M. F. Dwyer (American racehorse owner) and G. Simms (coloured American Jockey) presaged certain revolutions in race riding, which have born fruit within the memory of men still betting.

BILLY PLIMMER

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SEASON THE FIFTH

FROM SEPTEMBER 23RD, 1895, TO JUNE 1ST, 1896

CLASSIC associations were stirred early in the next season. Checketts, who beat Mortimer on the opening night, trained from the late Bob Brettle's old house, "The British Lion," at Digbeth. The home of the new Boxing revival was thus put in touch with a rare good man of the old school, and some spectators of Harvey Checketts' victory might well have been present at Brettle's encounter with Tom Sayers. On that memorable morning the hopes that Birmingham had found a stop for invincibility were crushed in a gallant defeat; and Brettle's right arm was dislocated at the shoulder by a terrible cross-counter.

A humorous interlude intervened between recollections of Brettle and a more substantial reappearance from the Past. If two minutes fifty-five seconds sufficed for Bert Smith to cry enough to Bill Corbett, Joseph Vincent, of Australia, showed an even greater alacrity in "quitting." Adorned with a copper-coloured skin, and hair long enough for a sunshade, he did not seem to know where he was; but when his opponent's glove grazed his chin he went to the boards. He might now have been thought safely anchored, but he seemed to

be more than ever at sea. He had clearly not been used to such form of navigation. But though he had lost his balance he had not lost his presence of mind. He rose. He looked round for his opponent. He caught sight of him on the other side of the ring. He walked across and politely shook hands. "Are you going on?" asked Fleming. But Vincent shook his head wisely. "That man nearly knocked my teeth out!" he ejaculated.

This recalls the "Mind them teeth!" (spoken to his second by the late lamented Joe Goss, after receipt of one of Mace's right-handers). And in renewal of the Classic associations marking the beginning of the season, no sooner had Mr. Fleming said "Cigars out!" on the night of October 14th than Jem Mace appeared. The occasion was a memorable one. The Veteran's introduction to the N.S.C. was followed by a contest between Dan Creedon (Australia) and Frank Craig for the Middle Weight Championship and £400. Throughout this "set to," which was a memorable one, Creedon, in spite of a disadvantage in reach, looked all over the winner. He showed wonderful quickness on his feet and superior ring strategy, and his victory on points was well deserved. It is doubtful, though, whether Creedon's triumph and the presentation of the Championship belt by Sir George Chetwynd created a greater interest than the spar between Mace and Dick Burge. The veteran of sixty-four fairly astonished all present by the skill which he displayed against an accomplished and youthful antagonist. Warm work characterised the next Monday's entertainment, when America was again to the fore. Dynamite was suggested by the

KID McCOY

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performance of Pat Daly, and "Ginger" Stewart took a competition. On the eve of our annual Gunpowder Plot celebrations, another conspirator against England's boxing supremacy was introduced in the person of Charlie McCoy. The American looked all the gentleman in his dark frock coat, striped trousers, and patent leather boots, but the lapse of a week saw him divested of this purely social side and giving a capital exhibition of ball punching. The wings of the National Sporting Club were now invoked to shelter an eight-stone-six-pound champion who turned out to be a disappointment. A different state of affairs resulted from Pedlar Palmer's meeting with Plimmer for £1,500 and White's antagonism of McCoy. Both these contests took place on the night of November 25th. The oldest members of the Club could not call to mind such a gathering. Americans mingled in the crowd. English, Welsh, and Irish Sportsmen were present in great force, and "gentlemen of title were thick as flowers in May." Plimmer was disqualified when badly beaten. White whipped McCoy; and Driscoll, if he didn't meet "his climax," was unable to digest Plumb. "God save Ireland!" was not Dave Wallace's exclamation on the succeeding Monday; Dave Job had better have left Harry Ware alone on December the 9th; Mr. Fleming's benefit drew the usual crowd; and Lottie Collins, Marie Tempest, and Ben Davies figured as fresh performers at the Club Concert, which worthily enriched the *Referee* Children's Dinner Fund, and marked the close of the year.

The 13th of January, 1896, disclosed Ireland in the usual act of taking a competition, and Pedlar Palmer in the unaccustomed attitude of taking

leave. He was, however, only "quitting" for America. He was going to explore dark continents in the form of George Dixon, and his staunch backer Mr. A. Snelling came in for a deserved share in the good-bye. The delights of Gaming may be as fiercely beautiful as Bulwer Lytton said they were, but it is a doubtful pleasure to see a hot favourite become a 33 to 1 chance before anybody can say "knife." Jim Williams lost £50 and a purse to Ernie Stanton in a demonstration of this process, and many onlookers counted their losses. The Ring at the N.S.C. was next week occupied by a boxer whose doings had once excited the highest hopes. Jem Smith had first attracted the attention of the Connoisseurs of the "Blue Anchor." After his fight with Greenfield at Paris, he became the idol of a wider, though not wiser, circle of admirers. These hailed him a ready-made Champion who was to rival the deeds of Sayers. Sullivan, then at the zenith of his fame, was supposed to be in danger of deposition. Practised experts, however, who knew the dangers of popularity as well as the points of Boxing, opined that if the International Contest *was* to come off, no time should be lost. It never came off at all. Smith's battle with Kilrain, while setting an undoubted seal on the Englishman's gameness, showed the fatal disadvantages to a Boxer of being "tucked up." Jackson's immense superiority in reach, to say nothing of science, emphasised the same truth in two rounds at the Old Pelican, and an unfortunate affair with Slavin treated an amazed Belgium to a surprising spectacle of British ruffianism on its travels. Smith's decline in popularity was now as sudden as his rise to eminence had been. The nonpareil of

Photo by *W. & A. H. Fry.*

MR. A. SNELLING

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yesterday was declared to be fit for nothing, and the disgraced favourite was left to muse in racecourse booths and emptied drinking saloons on the fickleness of public favour. His appearance at the N.S.C. was one among many attempts which this once idolised Boxer had made to regain a lost position. Glove contests, however, only emphasised his physical disadvantages. He was not able in these more scientific forms of combat to make amends for want of reach, by his capacity as a wrestler.

A continually growing tendency to put on flesh handicapped him further, and Creedon had no difficulty in disposing of him in two rounds. Some of Smith's old friends recalled different scenes and one of his old opponents stepped into the breach. Pritchard, through Mr. Fleming, challenged Creedon to a twenty-round contest. After Valentine had beaten Tom Lynch and an ex-Feather Weight Amateur Champion in the person of T. F. Davidson had performed the same office for Curtis, Fortune further showed her shifting disposition by turning her back on Ireland. Harry Greenfield put a stop to a long series of successes in ten rounds. The interval up to March 18th was devoted to minor contests and the début of Tom Duggan (Australia). A further week decided an amateur Billiard Championship in favour of S. H. Fry; and if Lincoln with its opening day accounted for the absence of many members from the audience at the Brigade of Guards' competition, the Brothers Collins (1st Grenadiers) accounted for the retirement of many opponents from the Ring. But the Transvaal War once more casts its shadow over this record. The Battle of Belmont proved as fatal to Collins as it did to David St. John. Both Boxers met their

death in the same way. An eye-witness thus describes the end of the Champion Boxer of the Army. "When our men had rushed the hill and were at the top, Private Collins of the Grenadiers found himself face to face with a Boer, who said, 'Spare me; I have only done my duty.' But the enemy's treacherous use of the white flag was recent in the Guardsman's mind. It evoked the stern reply, 'You have done your duty; I am going to do mine.' The bayonet thrust which closed the controversy was followed by a rifle-shot aimed from behind a rock, and like David St. John, Collins fell dead on the body of his victim."

The reappearance of Pedlar Palmer on April 13th, was productive of the usual excitement. His victory over Ted Willis was easily gained. The Boxer from Leytonstone deserved credit for his ambition, if for nothing else, and defeat came to him in no unfamiliar guise, since he had recently experienced Palmer's drastic methods at the Rooms of Ned Donnelly.

Narrative at once gives way to reminiscence. No historian, however social, who pretends to deal in the most fugitive way with Boxing, can avoid giving a smack on the back to the Royal Professor.

His upright form, his fighting face, are familiar to all Sportsmen, and neophytes who want to know how the gloves are best used, repair nowadays to Panton Street. Professors are too often unable to practise what they cannot teach. Donnelly was always looked upon as one of the cleverest Boxers of his day. His success as a teacher is the result of an inborn knack of imparting his own knowledge. Though trained in the Old School, he has never been a wholesale derider of the departures of the New. On the contrary, his insight has

availed itself of every development, and the result is an almost perfect system of Instruction up-to-date. To the daily toils of the Ring, Donnelly has not hesitated to add the nightly labours of the desk. The knocker was tied up, straw was laid down; from a carefully veiled seclusion the student emerged pale, but bearing a book. And the *Art of Self-Defence* was christened classic by a general consensus of opinion. This luminous exposition of new ways of getting out of danger, had the advantage of being illustrated. New editions were called for; the author awoke one morning to find himself famous; and was seen one afternoon on a Greenwich steamboat, reading the *Referee* upside down.

Such are the pick-nicking experiences of successful authorship. Donnelly's career, however, embraces a wider range. When still a lad, the breezy heights of Barnet saw him undergoing the toils, the hardships, and the dangers of the Ring. Tom Styles found himself opposed by a Boxer of far superior cut. While Donnelly's second battle with the "raw uns" took place ominously enough at Woking, and nearly left his opponent in that Cemetery which has subsequently sprung into fame. The Prize Ring was then on its last legs, Boxing pure and simple became the fashion, and Donnelly's notorious quickness on his pins had to be exhibited in a more prescribed area than a twenty-four-foot ring. His activity, however, rose superior to space. If his left hand came out like the kick of a horse, his dexterity in eluding a return was a subject of general admiration, and so meteoric was his disappearance from danger, that Joe Wormald in an attempt to find out where he had gone to, put his gloved fist into an officer's cupboard. A Strategist

so nimble found himself with opponents out-distanced. A match with Jem Mace was proposed. It hung fire. Mace was seen running at top speed from a railway station, and the two quickest men on their feet in England never met in the space prescribed by rule. Donnelly now offered to mankind those gifts which were shunned by opponents. He became a teacher. Some lessons given to our Present King enabled the Professor to affix to a list of Patrons already fashionable, Royalty's distinguished Mark. At an especially arranged entertainment at Buckingham Palace, his pre-eminence was attested by Crowned Heads, and H.I.M. the Shah of Persia was among a distinguished company who witnessed, with supreme astonishment, the Professor's unrivalled skill.

It was natural that Donnelly's rise to eminence should have been attended by adverse criticism. The teacher, however, of countless amateur champions could afford to come up smiling, and if one of them "got spiteful" while boxing a bye with his teacher at Lillie Bridge, and received a gentle reminder, the Referee was not called upon to give a decision. One was given however. It met with a memorable rebuke. The irritability of the Man of Letters got the better of the Boxer's calm. Donnelly forgot that *he*, too, had written a book; and, disdainful for the moment of his own literary fame, he first of all asked who the late Mr. Sampson was, and then, without pausing for a reply, pronounced that he was only a —— author like himself. Here was the unkindest cut of all. The Muse of History covered her face at this lead off delivered by her own son. But people wanted to learn boxing all the same; the saloon which Donnelly then

NED DONNELLY

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kept at 19, Brewer Street, continued crowded, and the lamentations of the Muse of History were drowned by the Professional cry of "Left and right at my 'ed very 'ard."

Panton Street, at the time of writing, still re-echoes to like inspiriting sounds. But this proof of Donnelly's still unequalled supremacy as a teacher of Boxing must not entirely throw into the shade his possession of other gifts. He has a keen eye for a dog. He won a wager by producing a Bourhound at the "Bodega," in Glasshouse Street, which stood as high as the counter. And fortified by an unconvertible maxim that "Buying is one thing and selling is another," he has done deals in dog flesh which have excited the envy of Jews, and made even Tykes prick their ears. Like most men loose in the leg, he is an accomplished skipper, and proficiency in step-dancing may be said to follow as a consequence.

It is a far cry to Australia from Panton Street. The Cornstalks were in evidence at the N.S.C. on April 20th all the same. They made quite a night of it. O'Donnell beat Sullivan, Stanton beat Daly, and the Concert in aid of the Charing Cross Hospital was followed by the Championship of the Cab Trade. "Smart chap that cabman—handled his fives well." Such was Mr. Jingle's criticism, in *Pickwick*, on the historic conflict outside the Golden Cross Hotel. That great genius born out of due time (a mere drudge where now he would have been an Actor Manager) would have been equally lavish of his praise had he witnessed the "set to" between Taylor and Sheppard. Both Jehus set to work as furiously as if they had been driving in a fog. But Taylor remembered the story about Pentonville

Hill. He kept a persuader up his sleeve for the final ascent, and victory went to Clerkenwell by the breadth of a nose-bag. A large audience watched this display between experts in the Noble Art, who too often have to practise it on the pavement. Captain Machell when at Aldershot, we believe, once asked a cabman to come inside. An officer's hut soon bore all the appearance of a ruined battery; and the cabman was so long getting a hiding that a double fare hardly covered the length of the assault. To argue with cabmen on their boxes is to talk to the clouds. But it is not always advantageous when they come down. As a race, they handle their "fives" as well as they did in Dickens's day, and many contests have finished as did Mr. Pickwick's, with a drink for the driver and an application of cold lamp-post for the fare. Mr. Bettinson may sometimes be seen being driven to Racecourses and other Commercial Centres by a professor equally at home on the box and in the Ring. This is Jack Watts, a very potent, grave, and reverend Signor, who, however, qualified for his present peaceful rounds of duty by fighting Jem Daly with the knuckles in Hadley Woods, and boxing with Laxton, when the latter was quite at the top of the tree. On the whole, Corinthians proposing to fight about their fares had better remember Punch's advice to those about to marry. Spectators of the Cabman's Championship may have had this truth impressed upon them more forcibly as the fifth boxing season was about to close. On May 11th Craig beat Duggan (Australia) in twelve rounds. On the 18th Ted Ware beat Tom Welch, and Birmingham bowed its brassy head. And on June 1st, before a crowd of

Photo by *Ed. Sharp.*

KID LAVIGNE

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Sporting men from all parts of the globe, the adage that Youth will be served was again exemplified; and Burge had to strike his flag to Lavigne under circumstances that call for special comment. They also point a moral. And the moral is the danger of defeat—or something worse—which accrues from Boxers unduly wasting to get down to an unnatural weight. To this unhealthy process Burge had undoubtedly subjected himself. In order to meet Lavigne under the conditions specified (conditions against which the present Manager of the N.S.C. has steadfastly set his face), Burge had to box at many pounds below the weight at which alone he could be both fit and *strong*. And in Kid Lavigne he had to meet a man who after an ordinary preparation stripped for the Ring a perfect pocket Hercules. Measurements and a Transatlantic record alike pointed to the French Canadian as a customer of quite uncommon toughness. Though his height was only 5 feet 3½ inches, his neck was only half an inch smaller than Bob Fitzsimmon's, who stands as nearly as possible six foot high; while in a contest specially framed for testing abnormal strength, Lavigne had recently beaten a certain Barbadoes Black, who was composed of such materials that it was thought that nothing short of an axe would make any impression on him. Joe Walcott had indeed become the terror of the land. Opponent after opponent had fallen before his sledge-hammer blows; and he was content to be named the loser of the contest with Lavigne if he failed to dispose of his adversary before the last round. But when the gong finally sounded it was Walcott who was groggy.

To such an opponent as this Burge at the

N.S.C. unadvisedly presented, both science indeed and gameness, but a form unduly wasted to get down to weight. The issue could not be doubtful. At long shots Burge was the master, but when it came to "mixing," the extra strength of the visitor was soon apparent. Stripping from top to toe one mass of muscle, quick on his feet, a natural two-handed fighter, and so splendidly developed that, though at a great disadvantage as regards height, he looked the bigger man, Lavigne soon found out that weak spot which proclaims a man boxing under his proper weight. All Burge's pluck and fine knowledge of Ring tactics availed nothing in a contest waged in reality against the first principles of Common Sense. Mr. Angle properly stopped the affair in the 17th round. And the decision, which found Burge on the boards, found him there from the mere process of exhaustion.

Photo by *Angle, London, S.E.*

MR. EUGENE CORRI

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SEASON THE SIXTH

FROM SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1896, TO MAY 31ST, 1897

ALTHOUGH it may be useless to gild refined gold, or paint the lily, several improvements were found to have been made in the National Sporting Club when Boxing was recommenced in September.

The eyes of the spectators were feasted on a new portable stage, capable of being taken down, reduced or extended, and the not less prominent parts of their personalities were catered for by additional and comfortable sitting accommodation. A fine start was made. Davenport beat Placke. Mr. Eugene Corri acted as one of the judges. His unusual and philanthropic exclamation "God bless!" is familiar alike to the National Sporting Club and the Stock Exchange. A genuine enthusiasm for Boxing shines pleasantly from a handsome face, and his well-knit figure proclaims the good all-round Athlete.

At the same function Johnny Murphy and Solly Smith of America were introduced to a large audience, already curious as to how the first-named would shape against Pedlar Palmer. This curiosity was gratified on the 12th of October, when in a twenty-round contest "the American stayed the full course but Pedlar won in a trot." This metaphor, borrowed from the racecourse (and for which

we modestly disclaim authorship), reminds us of the perils of mixed comparison, and of a memorable Malapropism perpetrated by a Dramatic Critic. Disdaining grammar and confinement to one branch of Sport in his search for invidious illustration, he wrote that a Farcical Comedy "ran very well as far as Tattenham Corner, but that there they took his Brush." This is the sort of literary enchantment which passes for fine writing and takes the reason prisoner. Murphy seemed in some such dazed condition when he entered the Ring on this occasion. He was surprised at his surroundings. He gazed up at the electric light, then he gazed down at the sea of shirt-fronts, and finally he looked at himself attired as he was in nothing but a pair of bathing drawers. This scene of incongruity may have hampered his efforts against Pedlar, but there is no doubt (to avoid racecourse comparisons) that the latter won easily enough on points. And the roar which went up when it became known that England had at last secured an International Contest was heard in the Market. We do not refer to "Tattersalls' Corner."

The tide of success, however, soon ebbed. A month afterwards Solly Smith beat Willie Smith, and W. Hill beat Arthur Callan. The Prince of Wales's birthday was thus celebrated by two International defeats. "Solly" had at all events left no stone unturned to bring about his share in the result. He had deserted the pavements of London for the uplands of Eltham in order (such was his Spartan resolution) not to be overwhelmed by "the sights." He was the better enabled by this process to overwhelm Smith, and he had laid the train for an easy victory on the Prince of Wales's birthday by prepar-

ing himself carefully at The Prince of Wales public-house. This noted training quarter is situated at no great distance from the ruins of the old Palace where our Kings used to keep Christmas, and it has sent many Boxers from its hospitable doors fit to fight for a kingdom. In addition to Solly Smith, Frank Craig, George Lavigne, Steeve O'Donnell, have here prepared themselves for the Arena, and the "Prince of Wales'" percentage of victorious visitors may be reckoned by a glance at the lists. A week before the two International defeats just noticed saw the learned town of Cambridge aspiring to fistic honours; but the Cambridge champion was Dorking. He fought the losing battle suggested by his name, and Canty emerged Senior Wrangler.

A Senior of another kind took the boards a week after the International contest, when Tricky Hook, who ten years back could make a fair show with the best of them, made an exhibition of Alf Hudson, and added a new pot to the armoury of the "Blue Anchor." Sam Kelly, of America, and his trainer, James Moran, were present on the night of November 23rd, when Ware beat Thomas; and Croot's defeat of Mike Smith, and Harry Webster's of Owen Sweeney, paved the way to Mr. Fleming's complimentary night and the annual *Referee* Dinner Fund Concert. At this charitable function two sketches by Dudley Hardy fetched eight guineas. Regrets were felt (or ought to have been) that the painter of "The Poor in Trafalgar Square" should be drugging an original genius "with poisonous honey stolen from France." From the vantage ground of the Committeemen Mr. Richard Butler mused on the development of the drama, and saw

the "Actors coming," not in Hamlet's words, "on their asses," but supine in the chariots of that Triumph which leads surely to Deification. Mr. G. R. Sims meditated one of his ingenious weekly bulletins on Bromide, Bulldogs, and Ducks, and Mr. Hodgkinson reflected on Mr. George Donaldson's growing Racing Commissions, all of which are reputed to pass through his book.

If Holly is associated with Christmas, Modesty is not a flower usually common about the period of the New Year; nor is the West Country considered at any time remarkable for keeping its own trumpet quiet. The greater credit was therefore due to Alf Wright, of Plymouth. He not only showed, on the 11th of January, that he could take defeat without advancing meretricious excuses, but also proved himself, when Hope was gone, to be possessed of the saving grace of humour. At the end of one of the gamest glove contests seen in the Club he remarked of his conqueror, Dave Wallace, "He was too clever for me; I stopped them with my head." Pedlar Palmer did not meet Stanton's deliveries on January 25th with this new form of Buffer; on the contrary, after fourteen rounds he left the ring, victor, without receiving a mark. The Bantam Boom was now fully developed. At nine o'clock on the night of this contest the scene in the Club was simply remarkable. Members jostled each other for seats; failing to find them they, with a fine disregard for criticism, invaded the Press Stand. Some of the Fourth Estate now found themselves in the dilemma of having to describe what they had not been able to view. Considerable dissatisfaction was expressed, and rightly. The Press, on its Sporting side, have always been good friends to

MR. W. J. INNES

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Boxing, when carried on under the conditions rigidly enforced by the N.S.C. And as a return for the discomfort to which they were on this occasion accidentally subjected, a reference may be made here to one of their most distinguished members. To anybody who pretends to a knowledge of Sporting Records the *nom de plume* of "Pegasus" is a household word. It shrouds and at the same time adorns the identity of Mr. W. J. Innes. A brilliant writer on all forms of sport, he has shown practical excellence on at least one side of it. In his day he was a fair oar, and rowing men have always found in him one of their staunchest supporters. Mr. Innes handed to Hanlan probably the biggest stake ever received by a professional sculler. He has also been a leading factor in the Amateur Billiard Association. To whatever he devotes himself he brings an untiring energy, and among the many objects on which this zeal has been lavishly expended, the great cause of charity may be fitly mentioned. Mr. Innes is, in short, a fine Sportsman of the old school, and lends lustre to the Albert Club, of which he is a distinguished member.

The storm had no sooner subsided than February the 2nd saw the introduction of Muldoon's Cyclone. The real name of this new disturbance from America was Fred Morris, and Dick Burge shared the honours of his first appearance. After two intervening Mondays, at which Shon Dackham and Tom Turner distinguished themselves, Ben Jordan (Bermondsey) and Fred Johnson (Hackney) met for £500. Hackney went down before the Southern Suburb, and Jordan had the path to victory smoothed for him by the searching preparation he had undergone at "The Duke's Head," Putney. Mr. Gus Brewer,

the well-known proprietor of this celebrated Sporting House, has earned laurels as a trainer on both sides of the Atlantic. Athletes of every kind have been through his practised hands. Jordan and Jack Goldswain, Boxers; Barry, Wingate, and Bubear, Scullers; J. Thompson, Sprinter; Hunt, Cyclist; J. Hibbert, Walker. His fifty-four years sit so lightly upon him that he can still accompany his lads at the pace of twenty miles in four hours, which is as fast as most of them care to go in their sweaters, and his system of training stands fast on the indestructible rock of knowing how to diet a man, as well as how to work him.

Mr. Brewer's transatlantic reputation was gained when he took his champion four-oared crew to America; and the recent additions of a separate gymnasium, and extra bed, bath, and sitting-rooms to the "Duke's Head," have made it one of the most comfortable training quarters in the Kingdom.

A return to the records of the National Sporting Club discovers the facts that though two brothers may both Box, they may not make a match; and that it is not a good thing for a Boxer to be on a shelf for four years, whatever may be said of Mincemeat. The first of these truths was exemplified in Johnny Thomas's defeat of Palmer (brother to Pedlar), and the second in Whatley's defeat of Williams. Four rounds sufficed in the latter instance to show the perils of four years' repose. And now all Sporting London was agog to hear the result of the great contest between Corbett and Fitzsimmons. It is not necessary to describe how the good news was brought from Texas to Covent Garden; but at the N.S.C.

MR. ANGLE

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hats were thrown in the air and the winner's health drunk in bumpers. Research has rescued the comments of a distinguished Trio :—

Mr. Walter Melville : "My sympathies have always been with Fitz."

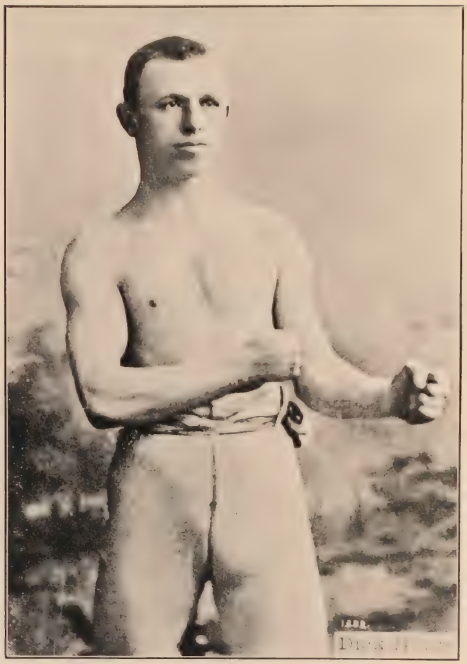
Professor Donnelly : "I thought Corbett would have won."

Mr. Charles Parsons : "I too thought Corbett a sure winner."

When experts thus differ there is an excuse for dropping money. It was done. But on March 22nd the Brigade of Guards came to the rescue of discomfited speculators with a rousing show at which Captain Bailey presented the prizes ; and faint hearts were further cheered on the same evening by Muldoon's Cyclone, who, desisting for a moment from his suggested occupation of riding on the Whirlwind and directing the Storm, "bossed" a troupe of black Piccaninnies in the varied evolutions of a Plantation and a battle Royal with the gloves. The scene was made additionally picturesque by the evening dress of the Officers and the uniforms of the Non-Coms. and the privates who viewed the proceedings in hundreds. A light of other days (old style) was now extinguished in the person of Morgan Crowther. But Dave Wallace delivered such a long curtain lecture before he put the extinguisher on the candle that the voice of Mr. Angle was heard saying, "You do the boxing ; I'll do the talking." Starlight is not a bad name for a coloured Boxer from Australia, nor is it an uncommon thing for little men to put up a big battle. These facts were evidenced in the appearance of a débutant and in a contest between Wood and Ray. A

further truth, quite in harmony with the laws of nature, was put upon record on April 26th, when the depths and force of Muldoon's Cyclone were effectively sounded by Dido Plumb. The Meteorological Department, it is believed, was not present, but the figuring worked out at ten two-minute rounds at eleven stone.

If Mr. Bettinson had been judging the Amateur Championship at St. James's Hall on the evening of April 14th, Walter Johnson, a black Boxer from Australia, had been waiting for two months, in Paris of all places, without finding a customer. The N.S.C. now gave an opening to this ebony wanderer on foreign shores. All Boxing roads lead to Covent Garden. And on May 17th, after J. Roberts (Drury Lane) had again shown his superiority to Alfred Green (Finsbury), the boxer who had found Paris deaf to the call of time put on the gloves with F. Morris. The succeeding victory of Jewey Cook over Walter Eyles was the precursor of a display out of the ordinary. Tom Burrows was the hero of the evening, and his entertainment took the form of Club Swinging against the Record. (A representative from the organ of the Evangelicals was not present.) But Burrows was watched night and day by Messrs. Piesse, Angle, Fleming, Tudor Davies, E. R. Wakefield, and was faithfully attended by two Club servants, Jack Bell and Walter Hagon. Thus stimulated the Australian brought off the remarkable quadruple event of swinging thirty hours without a break, losing five pounds (in weight), making thousands of admirers, and receiving a bouquet from the fair hands of Miss Maud Crawford. With the Epsom settling over,



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DICK BURGE

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Sportsmen turned their undivided attention to the last night of the Season. A less satisfactory result repaid their interest; though from the meeting between Causer and Burge much had been expected. The house was crowded. Chesterfield Goode looked after Burge. The hero of the recent Club Swinging feat looked after his newly-acquired patrons. But Burge, in the rural surroundings of Herefordshire, where he had undergone his preparation, had apparently been studying *Macbeth*. "Fair is foul and foul is Fair" is one of the parting observations of the witches. Mr. Angle reversed this decision on a confident appeal.

SEASON THE SEVENTH

FROM SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1897, TO MAY 23RD, 1898

"HERE'S riches," says Mr. Squeers (in *Nicholas Nickleby*), smacking his lips and tasting the milk and water. The remark would have been more appropriate to Pedlar Palmer, when, on September the 27th, he found himself the recipient of a diamond and gold belt. The Bantam Champion expressed his astonishment in almost as few words. When he had sufficiently feasted his eyes on Jewels, he examined Dave Sullivan (introduced as his next opponent). The audience were next made acquainted with Tommy White matched with Dave Wallace, and Spike Sullivan matched with Jimmy Curran. To round the harmony of a successful first night, Billy Brierly (Liverpool) gave Jim Barry a punching, and the same office was performed by Bill Wood on Nat Smith. If journeys end in lovers meeting, strangers sometimes come to grief in trial bouts. The truth of the proposition was demonstrated by Walter Eyles winning another competition. And the further maxim that Science prevails over brute strength stood fire, when, on October 18th, the Knight of the Diamond Belt got the better of the American visitor to whom he had recently been introduced. This was one of Pedlar Palmer's

"THE TWO BREWERS," CHIPPERFIELD

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Photo by *Walery*

MR. J. THOMPSON

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best efforts. Dave Sullivan showed himself in no common measure determined. He had trained at the "Two Brewers," Chipperfield. On entering the ring he tied with his own hands the Stars and Stripes round the post in his corner, and the melodious allurements of Mr. Joe Thompson offering to take £1,000 to £400 did not flurry him in the least. This was not an especially big offer for the man who had justly earned the sobriquet of the Leviathan Bookmaker. But Mr. Joe Thompson's immense dealings elsewhere are matters of Turf History, as are his unequalled experiences of racing and his ready and racy tongue. In connection, however, with the Sport more immediately under consideration it may not be generally known that a brother of the great Penciller was such a proficient with the gloves as, in the opinion of an expert, to have brought off one of the finest boxing bouts ever seen with the redoubtable Ned Donnelly, when Ned Donnelly was in his prime. To return to the contest under notice. Undismayed by the offer of Mr. Thompson, Dave Sullivan stayed the full number of rounds allotted, and when the decision was given against him, showed what a glutton he was for punishment by following the example of Oliver Twist and asking for more. Cheerful training quarters are a necessary condition to a Boxer's fitness. A residence at the "Two Brewers" had, it is true, not brought Dave Sullivan success, but for an ensuing contest Jack Walker, of Paddington, put himself into the hands of "Jolly Jumbo," who put him into the "Ballot Box," Horsendon Hill, Harrow, and in the ensuing shuffle he came out on the top. The ceremony under notice took

place on the 1st of November, and Johnny Thomas (Leather Lane) lost £50 and a purse.

And now a record of Sport and good fellowship becomes shadowed by the Inevitable Event. The season under consideration was destined to twice put the National Sporting Club into mourning, but the first blow of the Destroyer struck down one of the Club's first friends. On the morning of November 15th Mr. Fleming was found dead in the lavatory. The deceased Manager had been for some time in indifferent health, but nothing pointed to the sudden catastrophe, and a touch of pathos is added to a tragic departure in the fact that the book found by the dead man's side was a collection of Fairy stories.

John Fleming (whose obituary will be found fully given in the *Sportsman* of November 16th, 1897) had been associated with Boxing all his life. Like his father, who kept the "Globe and Pigeons," Ratcliff Highway, he for many years followed the profession of licensed victualler. His Managing capacity first made itself felt in such convivial resorts as the "Five Inkhorns," Shoreditch; the "Turk and Slave," Spitalfields; the "Coach and Horses," Beak Street; the "Mansfield Arms," Kentish Town, and the "Black Horse," Rathbone Place. Fleming's predilection for Boxing had, however, always been shown. At an early age he knew how to use his fists, and his removal from one house to another had seen him accompanied by a bevy of smart boxers. Ted Napper, Punch Dowsett, George Cunningham, to mention few names out of many, were always to "be heard of" at his premises. While at the "Black Horse," Rathbone Place, this bent towards Boxing was

Photo by *Walery.*

THE LATE MR. JOHN FLEMING

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Photo by *E. Gordon.*

BEN JORDAN

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significantly marked. Fleming took over the management of Jem Smith, and when the Pelican Club was started in Denman Street, Piccadilly, he became Boxing Manager. His connection with this establishment was wisely severed after the Slavin-Smith fiasco at Bruges. In the spring of 1891 he made up his mind to start a rival establishment, with the assistance of Mr. A. F. Bettinson. The result was the National Sporting Club, the first of its kind in the world of to-day. In this new sphere of activity Fleming ruled both principals and spectators with a firm and masterly hand. The position held by the N.S.C. is largely due to his tact and management, and expressions of consternation and sympathy were rightly evoked by the news of his painfully sudden death.

The prevailing woe was thrown to earth on November 29th, when the renewal of the popular Monday nights was marked by an International victory. Ben Jordan (trained at the "Duke's Head," Putney, before mentioned) beat Tommy White, Chicago, in nineteen rounds. Spike Sullivan (America) a little discounted the triumph by getting the better of Jimmy Curran, and the evening was made further noticeable by Mr. A. F. Bettinson (who now for the first time began to feel the full reins of management) introducing the Boxers, and by the results of the celebrated Grill being praised by the Referee. "I cannot name," wrote *Sporting Notions*, "the West End Restaurant, no, nor the City Chop House, I would back against the N.S.C. for its Grills." This judgment, from which there is no appeal, has a jovial ring. But an ominous experience in the Club's history has immediately to be recorded. On December 6th, Jim Barry, of

Chicago, met W. Croot, of Leytonstone. The American stopped the Englishman in the nineteenth round. The contest had up to that point seemed an even one. The blow which put Croot out struck no one present as likely to lead to a serious consequence. The beaten Boxer was removed in a dazed condition, and J. T. Sloan (who had learnt the art of self-defence from Barry) was, with his natural capacity for getting off, the first to congratulate the victor. The consternation of London Boxing circles may therefore be imagined when, a few days after, it was announced that Croot had died without recovering consciousness. The first effects of this fatality on public opinion promised to be deplorable. An outcry was raised by everybody who was not present. A sect of people who are never happy unless they are hysterical, set up an insensate scream. It seemed at one moment as if a national pastime was to be vetoed by the outcry of a few irresponsible old women. Fortunately for the National Sporting Club, the rising manhood of England, and every other consideration which has helped to make the country great, the respected organs of public opinion kept their heads. The flow of fanatical feeling was checked by some judicial utterances, and the discussion of a vital question was removed to an arena where irrelevant interruptions are not allowed in Court. The proceedings at Bow Street, and the moral to be deduced from them, may be briefly summarised by the remark that even the most regrettable accidents *will* happen, and that the Law gave a verdict in the interests of Common Sense. A full discussion of the pros and cons of the legality of Boxing competitions will be found set out fully in a later

MR. J. E. DEWHURST

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chapter. Meanwhile, the voice of the lawyers having become silent, some public performers of a less monotonous kind lent their aid to the *Referee* Children's Fund Concert. Miss Louie Freear discoursed on "Sister Mary Jane's Top Note"; many other distinguished artists contributed their share of exhortation and reminiscence; and Mr. Carwardine, a well-known Sporting Member, added a pictorial touch by securing a drawing of Phil May's for £7 10*s*. Among those especially prominent on this occasion in their efforts to ensure the success of the evening, was Mr. J. E. Dewhurst, a deservedly popular member of the Club, whose sportsmanlike instincts are widely known, and have shown themselves in a practical manner. It is not everyone who practises what he preaches, or who writes it either. But Mr. Dewhurst is Secretary of the Premier Amateur Boxing Club in England—the Belsize—and also, as Secretary, did his utmost to foster and encourage the National Amateur Boxing and Athletic Club, whose meetings (we hope only temporarily discontinued) took place on the N.S.C. premises themselves.

Boxing was resumed on the 10th of January after a month's interval, brought about by Croot's lamented death. Jack Roberts (London) lowered the colours of Bill Brierly. Mr. Bettinson performed the offices of M.C., and soon began to make his influence felt in a new departure. Jerry Driscoll's victory over Tom Woodley was followed on two successive Mondays by a series of those competitions, trial bouts, and exhibition Spars which have proved an invaluable aid to the unearthing of fresh talent, and which will one day reward Mr. Bettinson's exploring policy by disclos-

ing a real Champion. Billy Edwards, a well-made man of almost chocolate colour, made his first appearance in the Ring on February 7th, and a Spar between the Brothers Peters (instructors to the Wandsworth Athletic Club), on the same night, recalls some reminiscences of equally able professors.

In grave order they parade before the mind's eye, a burly, thirsty, and instructive throng. Mullins, remarkable for his name of Bat, his constant successes in every kind of Boxing contest, old style and new; remarkable also for his proposed innovation of an Orchestra at an Assault at Arms. Asked by a patron who had been let into the secret "What about the Band, Bat?" he replied, "The Band's all right. A Fiddle's come." Next let Read be remembered. Dumb-bells were this artist's hobby. "Put them up! put them down!" such was his simple formula for making Boxers. When the old pupil was retiring tired, he thus pointed him out as a walking advertisement to catch a new one. "Dangerous man that to meet in the street." And "Put them up! put them down!" again broke the silence of the school. A different war-cry was attributed to Professor Hundreds, who framed a more fluent remedy for running about a ring. Thus ran this Specialist's prescription: "Advance! Retire!" (aside) "A bottle of Ginger Beer." "Retire! Advance!" (aside) "A bottle of Ginger Beer," and so on, till the pupil's strength was exhausted, and the professional's thirst quenched. Another old-timer who had fought many battles (under P.R. rules) developed a more drastic method of shortening the hours of instruction. He thrust forward a formidable jaw, and invited the pupil to hit it exactly on the point.

The pupil had just paid his subscription in advance. When he advanced to hit the Professor on the jaw, he received a receipt for his money in the form of a punch in the stomach. He was, of course, too breathless to acknowledge it. But he was told not to whinny like a rabbit and to come again when he liked. Yet another Professor was mathematically inclined. Numbers were his hobby, in connection with a more liquid form of relaxation. When he cried "1" you aimed a blow at his head. When he cried "4" you aimed a blow at his belt. But when he cried "4 ale" you took him to the public house. This passion for figures often led this mentor to the racecourse. His equipments for calculation consisted of a bag and a satchel, and some open cheques on his clothes. The position he took up for scientific observation was not Tattersall's Ring. Whether he returned home with the bag full or empty was never generally known. He was a good runner and never bragged about his pedestrian feats. But the laudable object of his ambition was to start from home for once in a way with his bag full, and he mentioned this aspiration to a client who had faith and a banking account. "You wouldn't want anything more, I suppose," said the client, "if I put £100 in your bag?" "Yes I should," said the Professor, "I should want a big stick."

Further memories of the P.R. were evoked by the next contest at the N.S.C. When Nat Smith met Harry Harry, the old rivalry between London and Bristol, so deadly in the Palmy Days, was in evidence again, The glories of Neat were recalled. Harry issued natty colours, his friends sported the "Bristol yellow man" and attended in

crowds; and Bristol anticipated a renewal of a long succession of victories won on Lansdown Hill. Alas! The Londoner appeared on the top. The countryman was outclassed, though eighteen rounds had to be timed before the verdict was safe in Smith's keeping. An American now, not only showed himself as anxious as usual to take a contest, but also to take the gloves he had won it with. This twofold ambition was gratified on the night of February 21st, and Mr. Bettinson, who had previously introduced Spike Sullivan and H. Greenfield, and explained the conditions of the match, adorned Spike with the pair of mittens he coveted.

The anniversary festivities took place on March the 4th.

As it is upon record that a better dinner had never been served, even under the capable supervision of the painstaking steward, Mr. Scatterby, the historian is prompted to append the full *Menu.* The following skilfully diversified synopsis confronted hungry eyes :—

MARCH 4th, 1898.

Oysters.
Clear Turtle.
Boiled Salmon and Cucumber.
Sauce Hollandaise.
Fried Fillets of Soles.
Lobster Patties.
Chicken Sauté
Roast Hind Quarter of Lamb, Mint Sauce.
New Peas. New Potatoes.
Asparagus.
Rhubarb Tart and Custard.
Ice Soufflés.
Bloaters' Roes on Toast.
Dessert.
Champagne, Loffet & Co.

MR. G. DUNNING

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After this succession of *bonnes bouches*, *bons mots* were naturally the order of the night. Mr. Tom Anderson, one of the finest Amateur Boxers, a promoter of the Amateur Boxing Association, and a good man in a boat, was on this occasion in the Chair. Mr. A. F. Bettinson was in due course on his legs. In reply to the toast of Success to the Club (with his eye fixed on that policy of cultivating new talent to which reference has already been made), he promised better things in a few felicitous phrases. Mr. Chance Newton, happening to be in the festive crowd, adroitly responded for that portion of the Press not exclusively devoted to Sport, while for that vital and ably served side of it, which *is*, Mr. G. F. Dunning did the honours in the manner to be expected of a representative whose abilities as a writer, and whose decisions as a referee, are acknowledged and respected all the Sporting World over.

As if in answer to the Manager's inquiries for young blood, a Sprig of Myrtle, nine years of age, and weighing well inside of four stone, took possession of the astonished Theatre. The date of this phenomenon's appearance was March 7th, his name was Freddy Hughes. His brother, Johnny Hughes, went down on his knees for the Spar, and yet in this position was half a head taller than the Nipper. The immense success which attended this novel show neutralised the unsatisfactory impression produced by the way in which Jack Farley (Birmingham) disposed of Ted Ware. The inaugural delights of Lincoln somewhat marred the Military Night at Head Quarters in spite of Dr. J. G. Gowland's appearance on the Bench. Proceedings, however, were of a sensational character on the Monday

following. Tom Ireland, with victory in his grasp, was knocked out by Darkey Wallace, George Slark beat Johnny Thomas—the two contests went to within a few seconds of the allotted length (twenty rounds), and great surprise was felt by those who caught their trains.

Mr. Angle now returned to his old position of Referee, after more than a month's absence through illness. His admonishing tones were heard frequently, through Eddie Curry's ineffectual efforts to get rid of Ben Jordan's insistive visitations; and the labours of Boxing in an International contest and listening to elementary rules at the same time, produced finally this scrap of dialogue.

Angle: "Curry! I have given you lots of latitude; I tell you again, you must not hold."

Curry (receiving at the same moment a blow on the jaw): "He lays on me."

The entertainments which bridged the interval between this 4th of April and the last night of the season were of varying degrees of interest, never falling below the approved standard, often rising above it, and will be found duly chronicled in that complete Appendix to which these notes are but a running comment. Great Expectations had been formed for the 23rd of May. Great Expectations are, however, too often disappointments in disguise, and the Derby week show ended abruptly, though a more attractive programme has seldom been put forward. The reappearance of Chesterfield Goode gave rise to hopes and investments. Akers floored both in two rounds; Billy Edwards succumbed to Dido Plumb in four, in spite of being looked after by Mr. Harry Marks, Light Weight Amateur Champion. Edwards was further supported by having

DIDO PLUMB

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ten to one betted on him. And he seemed to have won. But Dido Plumb is an old practitioner. A long experience of Booth Boxing had taught him to keep a bit up his sleeve. This "bit" took the form of one of the most sensational punches with the right ever seen in the Club. And Edwards and the odds were floored in a moment. The attendance which witnessed this feat was a very large one.

The duties of the Pencillers, to say nothing of their rewards, became early in the evening apparent. But perhaps the most noticeable feature in a night's entertainment, which only ill luck prevented from being inscribed on the Club Record as "One of the Best," was the presence among the Spectators of the veteran Bill Benjamin, fresh from gallant little Wales, looking hale and hearty, the only living opponent of Tom Sayers.

SEASON THE EIGHTH

FROM SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1898, TO MAY 29TH, 1899

THE Thermometer at 85° in the shade the week before, promised a warm opening for the Autumn season. A fine night's sport rewarded those who patronised the proceedings. Jewey Cook may have found the heat too much for him even at glorious Sheen, where he did his work at the most comfortable and well-appointed house presided over by Sam Brown. At any rate he found Harry Webster too much for him; and on the following Monday, in a conflict with Ernest Brady (whose irritating pranks brought about disqualification), the patience of Job was again rewarded. Fifty pounds and a purse represented the prize. Billy Edwards (who had been one of the disappointments of a memorable Derby week) now tried his luck for the second time. Fair play and no Favour was all he asked for. He trained at Fairfield Farm, Chepstow, and he entered the ring full of fight. Frank Craig, however, cooled his ardour, and the time taken in the process was represented by twelve rounds. Two minor Mondays preceded another fatality. On November 7th Tom Turner (Holborn), an expert Boxer who had frequently performed with credit at the Club, had the worst of a contest with Nat Smith, of Paddington. How little serious

results were expected to follow his defeat may be gauged from this Press comment published the following morning: "A better night's sport could not be wished for, and Mr. Bettinson, who, as usual, acted as M.C., is to be heartily congratulated on the continuation of his much-appreciated cards."

But Turner succumbed in Charing Cross Hospital. The scandal and outcry of December the 6th was revived in a more insensate form. The clamours of Anti-Sporting faddists, who, by imputing design to accident, were in reality trying to abolish Boxing Competitions for good and all, were silenced, it was to be hoped finally, by the Grand Jury of the Central Criminal Court throwing out a preposterous Bill after listening to the Recorder's eminently sensible charge.

This second cyclone of Sentimentalism having been weathered, and a due interval of respect allowed, the Boxing entertainments were started on November 28th. Scotland (in the person of Mike Riley this time) was to the fore again, but at the subsequent competition Yorkshire (represented by Mike Goulding) was, strange to say, unable to give London points in a deal. Plimmer now made another plucky bid for the Bantam Championship. His efforts were in vain. Pedlar Palmer once more proved his superiority in fifteen rounds, which were watched with breathless excitement by an audience crowding every part of the building, and honoured by a special report in the pages of the *Daily Telegraph*. Casual comments may illustrate some succeeding events.

On the occasion of Mr. Bettinson's benefit a new light-weight from South Africa was introduced

in the person of Jim Holloway; for his victory over Jewey Cook (January 30th) the said Holloway strangely enough did his preparation in London. Ireland trained at the "Old Red House," Hannington, for the contest with Ted Marlow. Marlow beat him, though the loser's training quarters suggest treason, stratagems, and spoils. A Mace and a Carney figured in a ten-stone competition without gaining a verdict. A Portsmouth man in the person of Goldring "landed a beauty" when Rider found himself seated on the boards; and the feat was applauded by soldiers and sailors too. It was openly declared before proceedings commenced that "Frank Guess would want something more than a glove on his hand to beat Jack." This something undefined not being forthcoming, Roberts (who was the Jack) won a stubborn contest. Finally Mr. J. Demetrius, the well-known Mathematician of Jermyn Street, varied the sameness of referring to a winning racing account by acting as Referee at the Amateur Championship Competition (Billiards). His decision was a wise one. Wisdom won.

This satisfactory issue brings the Club Record to March the 13th. Jim Curran's prescription for dealing with Jim Holloway proved neither wise nor palatable. He looked soft and flabby, indulged in unfair boxing, and was disqualified in round thirteen. It was left to the Army and Navy to retrieve the situation. The Premier Service contributed its aid when Sailor Richardson beat Andrew Wood; and on the Monday following, March 27th, the Brigade of Guards made their metal felt in the most noteworthy of the many competitions they had given at the Club. These pages have borne witness

MR. J. DEMETRIUS

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Photo by *Flemons.*

MR. A. R. WISDOM

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LORD WOLSELEY

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to the lively interest which the National Sporting Club Executive have always taken in furthering the Noble Art among Soldiers and Sailors. They were now to receive a flattering reward for their patriotic industry in a public acknowledgment from the Commander-in-Chief. The competitions were noticeable for the successes of Private Williams, 1st Grenadier Guards, who beat Corporal Phillips in the Light Weights, 10 stone and under; of Private Thomas, 3rd Grenadier Guards, who beat Private Wilks in the Middle Weights; and of Corporal Harding, 2nd Scots Guards, who beat Private Smith, 2nd Coldstreams, for the Heavy Weights. When the time came for distributing the prizes Lord Wolseley performed the office. Taking the stage before a crowded house, he spoke as follows: "Gentlemen, I have been asked to give away the prizes to the winners, and I have great pleasure in acceding to that request. It is a source of gratification for me to do so, and, moreover, I am delighted with the very good Boxing witnessed. Well do I remember this Hall (being older than most of us gathered here) when devoted to other uses, and a man with a fiddle was the entertaining subject. Everybody is now pleased to see it used for more suitable purposes. Magnificent specimens of humanity and well-trained athletes are constantly taking part in a noble game and affording amusement for the community. If I were to exempt the great use to our country of this gallant and noble game it would be unfair and unkind, for its usefulness is unbounded. I sincerely trust it may continue to flourish, as such exhibitions are the true test of British pluck. The Club has contributed largely to a much-needed

want, and long may it continue to show its Members and Guests as good sport as it has done this evening. As military men we are all pleased to see such manly fighting, and under such conditions as have prevailed to-night it is especially adapted for soldiers when they have to fight, as sometimes happens on the field of battle, without arms. It is conducive to endurance and pluck, and makes men of them—the sort of men who alone can defend us against our foes."

There was a scene of tremendous excitement at the end of the speech. The light of recent events has lent an added significance to the Commander-in-Chief's stirring words. His praise of Boxing as a manly exercise especially adapted to soldiers, has been justified by the records of the Transvaal War. And the Winner of the Light Weights at the Competition under notice may share with Collins and David St. John the distinction of having shown of what stuff Boxers are made in severer lists than those of the National Sporting Club. Writing from Wynberg Hospital, Private John Williams thus gives his experience of war:—

"I was very nearly gone at Magersfontein, although my battalion suffered most at Belmont. I can assure you I have seen in this war what I shall never forget. There were about sixteen of us that used to always try to keep together. The night before the Battle of Belmont we were talking about our friends at home, and what we would have to tell them when the war was over, but, alas! we reckoned too soon, for that very day, when we ceased firing, we found eight out of the sixteen killed. Then I began to realise what war-

fare was. . . . It was there poor David St. John fell. You may imagine my feelings when I looked on poor David. He was riddled with bullets, but we had revenge. . . . At Magersfontein I lay in one position from daylight until four o'clock in the afternoon, firing away until all my ammunition was gone and there was nothing to be done but to retire. No sooner had we started than we were all shot down, and we lay where we were shot for thirty-six hours before the ambulance found us."

The Commander-in-Chief may well have spoken of "magnificent specimens of humanity and well-trained athletes taking part in a noble game." The piping time of peace lends itself, often blindly, to the pronouncements of peddling pusillanimity. But when War is in the air more manly and authoritative voices make themselves heard. One of the most valuable tributes ever paid to the most National of all Sports stands recorded in Lord Wolseley's speech at the National Sporting Club.

A visitor of another kind was in evidence the following week. As if as the result of the recent outbreak of Scarlet Fever, a doctor stepped in. He came only to veto a contest, though a Cinegraphic representation of the Sharkey and McCoy Fight made many members feel disposed to consult the oculist who had just advised Gould not to box. Palmer *v.* Rotchford for the Bantam Championship of the world now stirred Sporting London to its depths, and made Steward Scatterby and his staff busy in the Grill Room. Visitors from the country were present in more than their usual force. The hotels in the neighbourhood were crowded with enthusiasts, who had come up to see England triumph over America; and "Gow's," in the Strand,

a favourite house with Sporting Men, was extensively patronised. It calls for a word in season. "Gow's" is associated with memories of every branch of Sport. Its proprietor, Mr. Alfred Lunn, is well known in Sporting circles, and as is fitting and proper, is the father of two sporting sons. The elder of the two, a fearless rider and good shot, was also a prominent Member of the Vesta Rowing Club. Four years ago he rowed at Amsterdam for the Championship of the Netherlands, and on the first call of duty naturally went out to South Africa with the 34th Company of the Imperial Yeomanry to fight the Boers. The younger brother won the Feather Weight Amateur Championship in 1898. This brings us back to Boxing once more, and the big night at the National Sporting Club. If City men, West End men, representatives of the Bar and the Army, could have made Palmer's contest with Rotchford a memorable example of skill, pluck, and stamina, such a result would have been recorded. But some Members of the Church (whisper it not in Gath) occupied seats round the Ring, and the Ceremony was over in seven minutes. Rotchford behaved in an unorthodox manner; the Canons of fair boxing were violated, and Bishop Angle pronounced the customary sentence of Excommunication. He was absent from his office when Dido Plumb beat Hefferman. Mr. J. H. Douglas (popularly known as "Jack") filled the vacant Chair. He is not only a fine judge of Boxing, but was one of our finest Middle Weight Amateur Champions, and was successful three years in succession. He is also an excellent cricketer and a good man all round. Under his supervision Sailor Richardson beat Joe Barratt, and confronted by Dick Jordan,

MR. J. DOUGLAS

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Starlight (Australia) paled his ineffectual fire. An instructive scene in the weighing-room preceded the two great glove contests in which Ben Jordan and Dobbs beat Greenfield and Driscoll respectively. It took the form of the following dialogue, which is herewith committed to posterity :—

Addressing Dobbs (presently to be the victor in one of the grandest and sternest contests seen at the N.S.C.) Mr. Bettinson said, "I don't suppose you need remove anything." Dobbs: "Well, I guess I'll just strip something." He removed his hat, coat, and trousers.

SEASON THE NINTH

FROM OCTOBER 2ND, 1899, TO MAY 27TH, 1900

A DISTINGUISHED crowd and a geographical medley marked this opening night. Rarely has such a thoroughly representative, not to say comprehensive, gathering been seen within the walls of the N.S.C., and Chester, trained at Folkestone, beat Marlow. Novices next made a record. Brooks won a competition, and Driscoll, looking none the worse for his late outing with Dobbs, crossed Jordan in very quick time. The *Sportsman* remarked truly, "that the man would be very hard to please who came away dissatisfied with what he saw at the Club of Clubs on October 16th," and among the sights then on view was that of Bill Fielder beating Harry Paul. Jack Goldswain, in putting a check to the hitherto triumphant march of a young man from Drury Lane, whose name was Jack Roberts, thoroughly deserved his victory; but George Slark, of Holloway, was lucky in getting a draw against Corfield on October 30th; so lucky, indeed, that many who heard the decision were unable to believe their ears. A new remedy was found waiting for those aurally affected on the night of the next gathering, when, after minor bouts, Pat Daly beat Tom Woodley. The names of the Competitors were stuck up on each side of the stage.

A batch of novices found themselves in a similar condition in the Ring when J. Woods, from the Borough, won a competition, and though nothing in the shape of a champion had as yet been forthcoming, attention was again directed to Mr. Bettinson's praiseworthy efforts to unearth one.

The meeting of Jabez White, of Birmingham, and H. Greenfield, London, not only produced a most interesting contest (Greenfield was stopped in eight rounds), but affords an opportunity of discussing the merits of two historic and rival Schools of Boxing. The *Daily Telegraph* of November 21st, 1899, thus revives some memories of the past :—

"A keen spirit of rivalry has long existed between the Sporting Schools of London and Birmingham. Away back in the early 'fifties,' the Midland men fought under the blue bird's-eye against the pick of the Metropolitan talent, and such battles as Tom Lane *v.* Johnny Walker, George Lane *v.* Jerry Noon, and Hammer Lane *v.* Owen Swift, received extensive notice at the hands of the Sporting writers of the period. The Lanes were a regular fighting family, and scarcely a month passed without finding one or other doing duty in the ring. Peter Morris, Morris Roberts, Brettle, victorious over Mace, and an opponent of Tom Sayers, and later Ryall and Carney, men of grit and pluck, tried their strength and powers of endurance with the pick of the London Division. When the old style gave way to the new, or to put it more plainly, when bare-knuckle fighting went out in favour of glove contests, London and Birmingham still furnished the best and brightest material."

To return to matters more immediate. The defeat of Sailor Richardson by Jem Williams on

November the 27th should not be a matter for surprise, seeing that the "Hop Pole," Orpington, where the vanquished Boxer trained, has been found, through a communication from the Dead Letter Office, to have been wiped off the face of the earth. Billy Gordon, to lengthen the tale of mystery, met with an injury to his jaw in his encounter with Owen Sweeney, which puzzled the spectators at all events of the occurrence. But Harmony reigned again on the 14th of December, when, at the Concert for the *Referee* Children's Dinner Fund, amongst other attractive items, Mrs. Langtry showed how the fan may be made effective (dressed in Khaki); Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, arrayed in crimson, recited the "Absent-Minded Beggar," and prematurely announced the fall of Ladysmith; while J. L. Shine recited a poem about a Prince and a bloater, written by a Mr. W. A. Gavin, a popular Member, who was present in person, which proved to be of a fresh, original, and spontaneously humorous character.

When Boxing was resumed on the 15th of January, 1900, on which occasion Dick Jordan (Woolwich) was to have met Scales, a singular phenomenon manifested itself. In spite of the festivities at the close of the old year all the old members were found in their seats. Scales, however, was not found in his. He was after Dick Burge. Mr. Bettinson, however, found an efficient substitute in the person of Dave Peters (Cardiff). The Welshman proved the stronger man. Jordan found himself twice on the floor in the second round, and though he was by no means "out" himself, his ankle was found to be approaching that condition. Wales did not shine so conspicuously in

an ensuing contest, for after Jem Kendrick had stopped Bob Woodley in two rounds (with a right on the desired point), Joe Griffiths, Cardiff, while being put through the mill by Alf Bowman, showed himself at the same time lanky, muscle-bound, and stage-struck. He had not been struck much by Bowman, who took things quietly. And a similar instance of the care and discretion inspiring the Contests at the Club was observable on the following Monday night, when just before the finish of the eighth round, in a set-to between Tom Ganley and Ginger Elliot, the latter was seen to be done up, and Mr. Angle stopped the struggle. Jim Guinn, of Mile End, took this initiative on his own account in the middle of a rattling exhibition with Herbert Rex. The pair of bantams were well matched, a full trial was looked for, when, in the third round, for some reason best known to himself, Guinn held out his hand. January the 29th proved a night of introductions and summary dismissals. Tommy Hogan, of America, and Jem Ryan, of Australia, were introduced by the Manager of the Club. Littlefield sent Cartwright through the ropes twice, who then sat down without cause. Exall, of Bermondsey, and Jem Guinn were to have boxed six rounds, but boxed two instead (the blow which settled Guinn was not a hard one, but it was enough), and George Dunny was soon done with Jem Kendrick, falling repeatedly to avoid worse things. The *pièce de résistance* of this moving evening was supplied by a contest between Mat Precious and Mike Riley. The putting of these two lads together was considered by experts as demonstrating the best quality procurable at 7 stone 8 lbs. Riley had the advantage in height,

reach, and experience, but round nine saw the Birmingham boxer an easy winner. The Club-swinging feats of Tom Burrows always excite interest, but on this night the announcement of his approaching departure with the Middlesex Yeomanry for South Africa evoked loud cheers as well.

Two noticeably interesting shows now marked two successive Mondays. In the first Goldswain beat Bill Wood on points, after as good a bout as anyone could wish to see; in the second, Job beat Beach of Holloway, for the 7 stone 4 lbs. championship, the latter taking his gruelling like a man and standing up till he had to sit down. Some singular coincidences marked the 19th of February. Niggers are proverbially hard in the head. Elm is wood, and Joe Elms of America is a nigger. Yet Elms's head was unable to withstand the thumps which Ted Phillips administered in the sixth round of a fifteen-round contest. And in some preliminary bouts a sturdy sailor from H.M.S. *Severn*, after looking a winner, ran against a "dark" one in the person of Cush Dark. The latter had an excellent left; it came with its owner from Acton; and it put the gallant tar out of action.

Another Britisher went by the board on the occasion of an ensuing International Contest (not a sailor this time). Bill Chester was the victim. He hardly ever used his left hand (probably because six men in succession had fallen before his right one). He now fell before Tom Hogan's (America) in the eighth round. The conqueror strangely enough had only come out of a Turkish bath at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, the hospitality of Sam Brown at the "Derby Arms," Sheen, having furnished him with a pound and a half of superfluous

weight. This somewhat tardy experience of reduction, however, made no difference. And if some thought the American fought rather foully, experts recognised him as a master of cunning and shifty tactics.

If, however, Tom Hogan's experience of a Turkish bath had ended in victory, one Teddy Blunt's experience of a marble bath once brought about a singular challenge—and here we stray for a moment into anecdote. This Teddy Blunt referred to was a Boniface with a tendency to boast about his swimming powers. The bath in question he had himself built in the Junction Road. With his head full of this establishment and his own swimming powers, Blunt betook himself one Sunday morning on the usual outing to the "William the Fourth" at Hampstead. This house was kept by one Treadaway. He was a patient person, but to speak plainly he had heard of Blunt's swimming capacity and marble bath before. He now heard of them again. He probably heard of them all the afternoon, till the flight of time and the reeling of reason upon her throne (to say nothing of William the Fourth's) brought about Blunt's departure for Junction Road—but not before the latter had challenged Treadaway to a swimming match—of which, as a result of Brass and Bacchus, he expected to hear nothing further. Judge, then, of Blunt's surprise when, on opening the *Sporting Life* next morning, his eyes were met with the following invitation to battle :—

"Treadaway having heard so much of the swimming abilities of Teddy Blunt, of the Marble Bath, Junction Road, is open to swim him, *In his own Water*, twice across the Bath. *Both Feet off the Bottom.*"

Publicity often applies "The Closure." In this instance no more was heard of Blunt's swimming powers.

To return to the N.S.C. Regrets for this further National disaster were now effaced by the usual Anniversary Dinner. Mr. W. H. Low, the well-known owner of racehorses, was to have presided. Being unable to attend he characteristically made the Club a present of a "pony"—not for racing purposes, but to help to defray some expenses incurred in a matter of Excise of which more by-and-by. In his absence Mr. George Vize, the well-known all-round Athlete, and President of the Amateur Boxing Association, ably performed the Chairman's duties. Mr. Bettinson announced that the Club was in a flourishing condition in spite of the efforts of the Ungodly—I mean the Authorities; and Mr. Johnny Isaacs, the accommodating and well-known penciller, proposed the health of the Club's officials with a geniality all his own.

When Athos, in the Great Dumas' great romance, was confronted with difficulty or sorrow, he invariably sat down and drank a bottle of Spanish wine. The moral drawn is that there is nothing like Conviviality to change the luck. The National Sporting Club was now to savour this truth. They had banquetted after an International defeat. They rose from their seats, so to speak, to taste an International victory. On March 18th, Dido Plumb, of London, beat Jem Ryan (Australia) in eight rounds for the 11-stone Championship of England. Some presage of the coming good fortune seemed to be in the air. From twilight the neighbourhood was more than usually alive;

Photo by *Walery*

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members streamed in in hundreds as the hour for the contest drew near, and when the game of speculation began, the Londoner was most in request in a brisk market. Dido, who is about twenty-six years of age, was a pupil of the celebrated Toff Wall. In the contest under notice he showed much of his master's methods. He boxed with great coolness and judgment till the eighth round, when he appeared to go weak. But, just as Dido's backers were thinking of counting their losses, Plumb came Dido's right hand on his adversary's head-piece. Over rolled the Australian. He rose —only, however, to receive a repetition of the courtesy. The end was declared by Mr. Jack Douglas, acting as Referee; and loud and protracted cheering followed the announcement of the victor's name, and the break at the same moment in a long series of English defeats.

The Chroniclers now record some incidents in the N.S.C., compiled apparently from Natural History. On succeeding Mondays Johnny Thomas upset a two-to-one-on chance by "fighting like a Terrier." And when Tom Broderick (America) faced Walter Eyles (London) in the Ring, "he showed all the wildness of a fiery untamed steed." He also lost his head, threw his opponent, and struck him when he was down. Time 2 min. 30 sec.

After this excitement, so foreign to usual experience, a quiet evening followed (though the enterprise of the Management may be gauged by the fact that this night of repose comprised (besides a fifteen-round contest which went full time) one contest of four rounds, and four contests of six). This Monday of calm, however, paved the way to

a Monday of Surprises. They may thus be categorically set down :—

(1) Goldswain forfeited to Wood.
(2) Ben Jordan was caught napping.
(3) Pedlar Palmer broke down.
(4) Wood beat Jack Roberts of Drury Lane.

The key to this packet will be found in the following details. Jordan, on facing Fielder of Walworth, showed an excess of confidence. The sky of his view of his job was of an unclouded blue. Suddenly a bolt came from it in the form of Fielder's right hand. It alighted on the point. And the Boxer whose horizon had a moment before seemed so unclouded, was seen by his friends to be horizontal. Through a similar disbelief in there being any danger where none threatened, Jack Roberts, in his bout with Wood, first of all lost his head and then his equilibrium. After going great guns for two rounds he found that Wood had masked one (*right* hand again); while as a finish to a quadruple event, Palmer, in his spar with Scales, so injured his *left* one, that he had to repair to Charing Cross Hospital.

April's fleeting moods were exemplified on the last day of the month, when in a fifteen-round contest with Charley Simpson, Bill Lampshire, after hopping about all over the Ring, changed the light fantastic order of affairs in the fourth round by sending Simpson flying through the ropes. The Birmingham lad re-entered the ring by the same way by which he had left it, but only to have hope finally extinguished by a right on the chin. The loss of a shoe in a trial bout by a man of colour from Barbadoes may be added as an unusual inci-

dent of an evening in which Jack Woods lost a hundred-pound purse and consciousness in three rounds by playing his opponent's game. "Slogging" is the pastime referred to, and Marlow, who won on this occasion, has always shown himself a proficient at the exercise. And Ivor Thomas claimed an equal distinction on May 14th in his contest with Harry Chamberlain, proving himself much the stronger, pushing his opponent away from him in the clinches, smashing his guard down, and generally demonstrating the vitalising effects of Welsh air. On the same occasion acrobatics were displayed in minor contests, Orwell, Amor, and Gowlett were floored, and Leeper in a six-round contest with Johnny Thomas overleapt himself, like Macbeth's vaulting ambition. He did not "fall on the other" (whatever commentators may make out of that obscure Shakespearian passage), but he fell on his back in the ring, and was counted out.

And now May 28th ushered in a big night at Headquarters. The usual accompaniments to the celebration at an early hour began to manifest themselves. The Club has seldom been more packed. Visitors attended from all parts of the Country, and were reinforced by Sportsmen whose faces are familiar on the other side of the Channel. The big event of the night was no doubt the Contest in which Pedlar Palmer beat Harry Ware on points; and several features in it call for notice. The fact that two to one was betted against Ware showed that experts thought it a soft thing for Palmer. Yet Palmer rarely encountered a tougher job in pulling through from an opponent determined from the outset to make the best use of superior strength. (Many who had backed the winner thought the

loser had won.) Apart, however, from this principal event of the closing night, Ben Jordan beat Tommy Hogan under circumstances which call for notice. Hogan, who trained from Sam Brown's, East Sheen, had some difficulty in getting to weight. But a previous experience of a late Turkish Bath had made him careful. The scale showed him a quarter of a pound inside what was required at weighing time, but as hungry as a hunter. He made short work of a fairly good amount of jelly, washed down by the best part of a small bottle. In the fourth round, however, he was so unfortunate as to receive a "right hook" in the place where he had put these delicacies. It finished him and the Ninth Season. But an anecdote recalled by the defeated man's name may be allowed to ring down the Curtain. In days of yore, that is to say when Langham presided over an establishment for teaching people how to use their hands, a certain *Scrapper* used to frequent that Temple of Art who could neither read nor write. A gentleman, interested apparently in the Educational System of the Country, thought this was a pity, and offered the *Scrapper* in question £5 if within a certain time he could write his own name. Full of anticipation and a thirst for Lore, the Scrapper hied him to a Professor. The march of Events proved that he hied him to the Wrong One. He sought the educational administration of one Tommy Hogan, a cunning, clever Irishman who sympathised with this thirst for knowledge and, as a fellow-boxer, promised within a given time to make this novel sort of pupil proficient. Lessons were given. Midnight oil and Beer were consumed. The flame of Learning burnt brightly. At last the day of Examination arrived,

and the Scrapper appeared before his Patron, pale with application, but feeling the five pounds already in his pocket. Asked if he could write his own name, he said "Yes," and that he was there "to finish this Soft Job on the Spot." Pen, ink, and paper were brought; a student's tongue was seen hanging out of his mouth; a pen was heard laboriously scratching. At last the labourer's task was o'er. But when the result of his industry was submitted to the Patron, it was found that the Scrapper had written—not his own name, but that of *Bat Mullins*. And shouts of "Where's that Hogan?" rent the air.

SEASON THE TENTH

FROM OCTOBER 1ST, 1900, TO MARCH 18TH, 1901

THE opening night of the tenth Season found the National Sporting Club thoroughly renovated. The opinion of those present on the new decorations was that the Club presented a spick-and-span appearance, and the view of the programme was that, though not pretentious, it panned out well. The latter opinion was probably not that of Jem Barry (St. James's), as far as his contest with Tom Dixon (Newcastle) was concerned, the cause being an unlucky punch in the body (not on "the point" this time), and what was to have been a fifteen-round contest ended at round seven. Three importations from America were introduced to the audience. Amongst them was a recent conqueror of the Coffee Cooler in the person of George Gardiner (Massachusetts), and Charley McKeever, who was thought by experts to look a particularly likely-looking customer, and who was destined soon to show them the correctness of their view. The appearance of American Boxers likely to stop Englishmen is no novelty in these days of Grace; but a Thursday afternoon show was. This was the first of a series of matinées inaugurated by Mr. Bettinson with a view to finding some rising native talent to counteract the tendency above

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indicated. Twenty-five Englishmen were found to be full of aspirations. Fifteen were conspicuous by their absence. Two of the remaining ten were found to be over the stipulated weight. In spite of these drawbacks a succession of most excellent bouts stamped the new departure with the hall-mark of success, though Crudgington, who looked the best boxer of the pack, was defeated in the first bout of the second series to the general surprise of all present, and, no doubt, of Mr. "Jolly" Jack Hurst, who acted as Judge.

There are always people at every Club only too ready at times to propose amendments, rules, and unfailing recipes for promoting prosperity. It is to be doubted whether a more sensible receipt in this direction has been put forward than that fathered by Mr. T. C. Stevens in his speech as Chairman at the House Dinner on October 14th. He advocated Dinners, Concerts, and Sociability. And no doubt the Steward, Mr. Scatterby, had done much to inspire this eminently sage advice, by previously decorating the board with a banquet which might have given a twinge of envy to a continental Chef. The International Contest between Charley McKeever and Dido Plumb, which immediately followed on this scene of joy unconfined, cast a shadow over the recollection. The bout went in the usual way. England had again to take second place, and Dido Plumb, though as game as a pebble, suffered defeat for the same reason which the late Marquis of Hastings gave for men being ruined on the Turf. "It is not Race Horses," he said, "which ruin people, but Slow Horses." Dido was too slow for the American, who indeed proved himself not only a

past master of clever and tricky tactics, but quite exceptionally quick with both hands and feet. Three other incidents may be noted of a most successful night. Plumb's money was put up by the Proprietor of a Boxing Booth. Very few vacant seats were to be seen at the appointed hour; and when the Bell ceased the Theatre was full.

Some of Bill Lampshire's backers were full too —of expectation — on October 22nd, when the boxer from Islington entered the Ring against A. Tokell, of Newcastle, since they were said to have found £200 for him to meet Pedlar Palmer. If the money had been found, it would have been lost, for a hugging match showed Lampshire with no steam behind his blows, and an uglier bout of boxing has seldom been seen. Two brief notes may suffice for two succeeding shows. Guyon beat Hands in spite of the latter being strong on his Legs; and Private Barratt gave an exhibition of the dash of the Rifle Brigade by delivering heavily on Bob Sadler's mouth. A succeeding thump brought about the defeat of the St. Luke's representative; while on November 1st, at a Thursday matinée in a fistic representation of "Soldier and Sailor too," J. Hendrick (H.M.S. *Pembroke*), by defeating Private Knight (Grenadier Guards), asserted the position of the Navy as the Premier Service. If the Matinées organised by the Manager have not yet succeeded in evolving a champion, they have at all events proved vehicles for mirth, sport, and amazement. On November 4th, at the first of these shows, A. Willoughby put forward his claims to wear the triple crown. With a modesty unexpected in his profession, he

entered himself as a novice, and proved to be a boxer of fifteen years' experience. The succeeding Monday night, however, turned the Club's attention to more genuine business. In meeting Nat Smith (Paddington) for £100 and a purse, Jack Roberts (Drury Lane) found himself pitted against a man of the greyhound build, with the long arms and the head of a clever Boxer. Amateur Championship honours were also behind the representative of Paddington, to say nothing of a weight of money. Fortified by these aids to success, Smith started at top speed to finish his job quickly. But in the second round a nasty jolt on the chin stopped *him*. He rose dazed, but could not find Roberts. And though he rose from the floor on two occasions on the same game quest, the Referee rightly and humanely held it to be a fruitless one, and a sensational contest ended in the triumph of Old Drury.

After noting the fact that at the next Thursday Matinée Mr. Hall-Say, who in these degenerate days practises the art which he gives an opinion upon, was one of the Judges, we come to a reappearance of the now famous Pedlar Palmer. His opponent on this occasion was Harry Ware. And in the opinion of an expert, "if style, effect, and clean hitting go for anything in a contest for points," Palmer should have won. This was not the opinion of the Referee, to the stupefaction of all present, including Ware's chief backer, who previous to the award was preparing to pay out his losses. There was a great deal of excitement at this finish, as there was indeed earlier in the evening, when Corporal Saunders, Light Weight Champion of the Army, went after Bill Telford,

of Bloomsbury, as if he wanted to qualify him for a Mummy in the British Museum. Our great National Depository was in the end defrauded of a promised acquisition, and the soldier only won after having to go the full ten rounds,

When Billy Smith (America) beat Bill Fielder (London) on November 19th, within two rounds, standing well over his opponent and settling his account with a nasty rap on the throat, none present dreamt that the fine young victor was destined ere long to link the Club with further tragic memories; but the fated day was coming and, indeed, was not far distant. Meanwhile, another day with the novices evoked classic recollections in a singular way. The following historic names cropped up and lent no aid to the bearers of them. Bat Mullins gave a display which would have made the celebrated one call aloud for that orchestra which he once engaged to enliven a benefit, and of which only one fiddler turned up; Ben Bolt, if he did not remember "Sweet Alice," is not likely to forget Jim Wheeler; and Hickman, oblivious of the Gas Light Man's splendid record of rarely staying in the Ring two rounds without leaving his opponent "out," quitted it under that recorded time on receiving a blow in the stomach.

The mention of names once so well known in the palmy days of the Prize Ring evokes recollection of a later attempt to revive the glories of that august Institution; for the date, it will be sufficient to say that it was in these days of Grace. The *venue* was Hadley Woods; the Principals were Harry Crook and Gleeson; the fight was for £25 a side. Dud Windett and Bettinson found the money for Crook. Lakey (Dick Dunn's clerk) found the money for

Gleeson, and Crook trained at Edgware. So far everything was on the straight.

But at the appointed place of meeting between the parties (Highgate Archway) difficulties began to make themselves felt. Two Vans stood there in waiting, ready to carry twenty people a side to the scene of action. To these Vans, however, one Pearson (a Sweep by profession) objected strongly, on the ground of a too generous self-advertisement. To remedy this defect he recommended what he called "The Rattler," by which he meant The Great Northern Railway Company, Limited. Lakey silenced this objection to the Vans by a remark of Genius. "Let us pretend to be going to a Bean Feast," he said, and into each Van twenty Sportsmen mounted. The aspirants, however, to this harmless form of Entertainment had forgotten that Bean Feasts do not usually take place at five o'clock in the morning. This fact being well within the knowledge of the Authorities, "something strange happened," as Mr. Rider Haggard would say. The Ring had no sooner been pitched in an ideal spot of sylvan beauty, the necessity for utmost silence proclaimed, and four rounds fought amidst a Babel which could have been heard for miles, than the solemnities were interrupted by cries of "Police!"

The usual exhortations not to run away, but to appear unconcerned (as if at a Bean Feast), resulted in the usual general Stampede. Potter's Bar was the next place selected, but Nemesis, though lame, is relentless, and proceedings had hardly recommenced at Potter's Bar when the reappearance of the Police once more lent movement to the scene. "The Rattler" originally recommended by Pearson the Sweep was now requisitioned.

Tickets were taken for King's Cross, the diplomatic intention of the party being to alight at Oakleigh Park. Fast trains, however, stop for no one, not even Bean Feasters. That proposed Haven of Violence was passed in the twinkling of an eye, and necessity (kindly as it turned out) made Wood Green the point of disembarkation.

Recourse was now had to the advice of a well-known Sage who lived in the neighbourhood; this was the celebrated Harry Brunton, erstwhile Second to Tom Sayers. Brunton having listened attentively to the dismal story of Struggle and Interruption, recommended as a likely spot a scene lately enlivened by the efforts of some other Christian Endeavourers, namely: Alexandra Park. In not too public a portion of this vantage ground the affair was "satisfactorily brought to a conclusion" in the modest time of two hours and a half. At the expiration of that interval Harry Crook found himself still at Alexandra Park, it is true, but "not in the running," in fact, beaten by Gleeson. This was the finish as far as Crook was concerned, but the final stage of the Outing was not reached till seven o'clock in the evening, at which precise period Bettinson put the vanquished pugilist into a hot bath at Pentonville. The time from start to finish of this Historic Bean Feast was therefore fourteen hours, and the last thing heard was the voice of Pearson the Sweep disconsolately proclaiming: "This comes of not taking the Rattler."

November 29th supplied food for mirth. Dick Burnop, from Lambeth, appeared to have missed his vocation. The Music Hall should have been his stage; for every time his opponent, J. Fidgett,

Photo by *Augustus Scott, London, W.*

MR. TOM SCOTT

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essayed a lead, he whistled; but when Fidgett, roused by this uncommon conduct into a state of temper suggested by his name, stretched the whistler on the floor, the conditions were changed. The spectators then began to whistle themselves, all round, and Burnop took a more serious view of the affair, which went against him. On this occasion Mr. Tom Scott, "the only Scot," Amateur Boxer, expert billiard player, in fact, a good all-round sportsman and a popular member of the Club, acted as Referee.

The contest between Jem Williams (Marylebone) and Johnny Thomas (Leather Lane), in which the former proved the better man in nine rounds and by an exhibition of fast, two-handed fighting, in the opinion of good judges justified his claim to be quite in the first rank of the Bantams, preluded another National Sporting Club Concert. At this Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, in a lovely dress, created a *furore* by her recitation of "The Pocket Wellington." Mr. Herbert Campbell gave many pause by his philosophisings on "I couldn't lend you very much on that," and Mr. Martin Harvey established his claim to the position of a romantic actor with the genuine ring.

On December 16th followed another agreeable function in Mr. A. F. Bettinson's Annual Benefit. Benefits to be satisfactory are for the Deserving, and not a discordant note was struck during a festive evening.

The year 1901 opened auspiciously with some preliminary bouts for an 8 stone 4 lbs. Competition, and members assembled in large numbers. They were no doubt "fresh" from the Christmas recess, and this may have accounted for the fact that there

was considerably more noise heard in the building than is usual during the solemnities. A judicial threat to have some of the too vocal ones removed from the theatre restored the peace that was lacking, and recalls an anecdote of a bygone keeper of Order. Walter Laburnum is the hero of it; but he kept order in another way than that practised at the N.S.C. The Albany Club was the scene of his jurisdiction. He was M.C., and at a contest in which one Mike Small entered the Ring with somebody else, no M.C. ever roared "Silence!" louder. But as the contest proceeded, and Mike Small did not assert his supremacy so soon as was expected, Nature asserted her supremacy over Walter Laburnum. "Go it, Mike!" he himself roared in a voice of thunder. This natural result of an artistic temperament and a moneyed interest is not this celebrity's only claim to notice. He was a "Patter Artist" on the Music Hall Stage of an inimitable type; in rendering "Bill Adams" none could vie with him, and a native wit made him author of as ready a retort as ever enlivened Newmarket Heath. Meeting one Spriggins, who possessed a capacity for sponging and touting in conjunction with an abnormally large mouth, Laburnum, who was in search of early ozone, asked this prophet what he was doing. "Out for a breath of fresh air," replied the large-mouthed Spriggins. "For God's sake don't take *Two*," said Laburnum, "or there'll be none left."

To resume. After Bowker, Buck Shine, Nicholson, and Walters had been chosen Candidates for winning honours, January the 14th brought in the first of the celebrated Monday nights. On this occasion the conclusion of the bouts above mentioned

Photo by *Bassano.*

DR. JACKSON LANG

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was witnessed by a large audience, and after Harry Barrett had defeated W. Lynch in half a round, and Charley Knock had not unnaturally given the "Knock" to C. Ryder (strangely enough in exactly the same time), Tom Bowker (Manchester) carried off the Prize from fifty-one competitors. Now followed the House dinner, with Doctor Jackson Lang in the Chair. It was the agreeable duty of Mr. Eugene Corri to propose the health of this urbane and popular Medical Officer of the Club, and the speech in which he did so was couched in properly felicitous terms. He spoke of Dr. Laing's high social position, of that straightforward integrity in business which had earned him the admiration of all his patients, and of the genial nature and love of sport which had made him one of the most popular members of the N.S.C. Complete harmony reigned in what was once its only Cave. The same desirable condition of affairs was not observable on the succeeding afternoon. Nor can the Racing at Hurst Park, which had an effect on the attendance, have accounted for an unfortunate ambition on the part of several lads to take matters out of the hands of the authorities and "arrange things," even in their novitiate!

Business had a more genuine ring on the following Monday night, January 21st. The date deserves to be especially chronicled, for it was the occasion of one of the most sensational contests ever held at the National Sporting Club. Jack Roberts of Drury Lane, known amongst other names as the "Broadstairs Pet," beat Will Curley in the seventh round, after having "gone out" to 20 to 1, when at the end of the fifth round he looked, as the odds against him proclaimed, to have not the ghost of a

chance. His head was always in the way; but that head seems to have been made of cast iron. Halfway through round six, when Roberts seemed to be an absolutely beaten man, suddenly, and amidst tremendous excitement, his opponent was seen "to go weak." Curley fell forward—Roberts shot out the right—the affair was over. And Roberts's share in it was thus summarised by a well-known Sportsman from the North, in words which give a graphic picture of the endurance of the representative of Drury Lane: "See here! He's no man! He's not human! Nothing human could have stood what he has!" A less professional commentary might suggest that Roberts in this exhibition of indomitable gameness, in this utter disregard of the fact that he was beaten, unconsciously displayed those qualities which won Albuera and Inkerman, and which will always remain the greatest inheritance of our Race.

After this Homeric contest the cessation of any further shows till February 4th might have been considered a natural event, with a view of avoiding an anti-climax. Unfortunately this gap in the Club's entertainments was occasioned by a loss which the nation will always feel as irreparable. The death of The Great White Queen is an event too tragic and too august to be more than briefly referred to, and that in the spirit of the deepest and most sorrowful reverence, in the pages of a Sporting Record. It will be sufficient to say that in that noble life every virile instinct of her country was reflected to the core, and that probably no greater specimen of that noblest statesmanship which is born of sympathy, is recorded in English History since the days of Elizabeth, than that visit to

Dublin which followed her ever-memorable message to Her Brave and Fighting Irish.

The comedies of life—not to say its farces—follow hard upon its tragic moments, and at a matinée on February 7th an Upton Park Hairdresser seemed to have imagined himself an Acrobat. He fell continually without being hit, and, to the astonishment of all present, paid not the faintest heed to the warning voice of the Referee. In the fulness of time he was disqualified for this misplaced agility. It then was discovered that he was unfortunately deaf and dumb. The Club Doctor could have been no assistance here, but acting in accordance with those dictates of humanity which regulate the Competitions (but which some well-meaning people outside have been disposed to question), he interfered with admirable promptitude three days before, when, after Jem Harper (Bloomsbury), in his bout with Jack Dickson, had received several jarring blows on the throat, the recipient of these unusual compliments retired under medical advice, though apparently strong and well.

The superiority of American Boxers over our native products—a sad fact which has later on been expertly dealt with—was further demonstrated in the meeting between Pat Daley and Johnny Hughes for £325 and the Light Weight Championship. Hughes did all he could against a cunning, shifty fighter of far tougher material than himself, and then, when the end came, did more than he should have done—by claiming a foul. The Referee, however, saw nothing of it, in company with everybody else (who was not pecuniarily interested in seeing what had not occurred). All but a

minority were satisfied. And the winner started at 5–4.

Enough has been said of the Novices' Competitions, the object at which they are aimed (which will no doubt be attained in time), the good sport which is to be seen at most of them, the amusement which may be extracted from the remainder. To pass to the maturer side of the Club's programmes, on February 18th Leicester, in the person of Fred Greaves, beat Northampton, represented by H. Smith, and a large contingent of Leicester Sports were present to see the triumph of their town.

On February 25th Johnny Thomas beat Sailor Richardson, who, impelled no doubt by maritime experiences, thought fit to hug his opponent; and on March 4th Bill Chester (Mile End) beat Bill Wood (Clapton). Sensational incidents marked this contest, which was fifteen rounds for £100. It only lasted one, and that one was one of the hottest ever seen in the Ring. Details: Chester measured his man nicely, twice shot the left on the body, staggered his rival with a blow on the jaw; Wood replied in kind, but Chester was again responsive with a half-arm right on the chin. This brought about the end, and stamped the winner in the opinion of experts "as just one of the sort to win battles, if not a finished exponent of the Art."

The National Sporting Club Banquet, which followed this fistic repast, remains remarkable from the facts that ladies were for the first time present, and that Sir Claude de Crespigny was in the chair. The face and figure of this true, all-round Sportsman of the Old and Best School are familiar to

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SIR CLAUDE DE CRESPIGNY

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everyone who has any pretensions to follow in his footsteps. And of him many tales, all excellent, are told. A characteristic one may be borrowed from the pages of the *Referee*, with due compliments and acknowledgments to "Mr. Sporting Notions." "One day, some years ago, at Sandown, I think it was, and on the occasion of a Grand Military Meeting, Sir Claude, who was expected there, did not turn up. I heard inquiries being made on the subject among a little *posse* who knew the Sportsman. 'Gone away,' said one. 'I came across him at Charing Cross; he was just off to America, or Ceylon, or Roumelia, or some other foreign parts, on what he called a Punitive Expedition, after a chap who had behaved badly to a lady.' 'What's a Punitive Expedition?' asked a member of the little crowd. Spokesman number one was not absolutely sure, but affirmed to the best of his knowledge and belief the gallant veteran was going some hundreds or thousands of miles, as the case might be, to punch the chap in question's head for him."

Here at least is disclosed a relic of the classic Corinthianism!

One of the most remarkable contests in some respects that ever took place in the Ring of the National Sporting Club has now to be chronicled. On March 18th Harry Harris (Chicago) met Pedlar Palmer (London) for £650. The contest ended in Harris being a good winner on points; but in his struggle against an opponent exceptionally, even abnormally, gifted in height and reach, Palmer showed himself one of the cleverest and gamest little boxers that ever took the Ring. In an event of this description some preliminary inci-

dents may prove of interest. Harris trained at the Cross Hotel, Kingswinford (Mr. Tom Oxborrow), and he had some difficulty in getting to weight. When the time came for this ordeal Palmer entered the Club all smiles. He shook his opponent by the hand cheerfully, and exclaimed, "Hope you are well. Did you have a good time while training?" In true American style, Harris replied, "Thanks. I feel great, and was delighted with my quarters. I guess you're fit, Pedlar?" Pedlar (unconscious of the Fate in store) answered, "Never felt so well. Am sure to beat you." Having thus exchanged words, the two repaired to weigh their bodies. Both tipped the beam at 8 stone 3 lbs.

But in the evening, in the expressive words of a contemporary, this is what was seen. "Towering over Mr. Bettinson, the Manager, who stood by his side, the American looked long enough for a Middle Weight, and altogether too tall to enable him to get down to, and fight strong and well at 8 stone 3 lbs. It was subsequently ascertained that the visitor stood, as near as possible, 5 feet 8 inches.

Against this phenomenal height and disadvantage, Pedlar Palmer contended for the full number of rounds with the utmost gameness and skill. From the first he was aggressive. In the third round the American, who seemed suffering from nervousness, was on the boards. But then, as has so often been recorded in these pages, just when Palmer, who had shown infinitely superior style, seemed to have the contest in hand, the American began to hold his own. Making the utmost use of his reach, he delivered time after time with marked effect on the Englishman's face. Four times

PEDLAR PALMER

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Pedlar was brought to the ground, and at one time looked like going all to pieces before the end of the bout. Yet he came again towards the finish, though distinctly dazed, and boxing with surprising dash and determination revived for a moment his admirers' fading hopes. Height and reach, however (so disproportionate), told their inevitable tale, and the American slowly forged his way to victory after one of the finest contests ever decided at the Club.

PART III

OTHER WEIGHTY CLUB MATTERS

Not Indian, as might be supposed, but connecting the N.S.C. with such agreeably diversified Places of Entertainment as Somerset House, the Quaint Quadrangles of the Law, the Great Continent which the old Genoese gave to Europe, and the Court of Common Gaol Delivery.

SOMERSET HOUSE

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I

EXCISE

A SMALL SYMPHONY FOR SOMERSET HOUSE

ON the 24th of April, 1899, there was a Boxing Entertainment in progress at the National Sporting Club. In fact, Ted Marlow was engaged in manly and English style in beating Jem Barry on points. The Members present, however, had they known what was occurring in another part of the building, might have been equally interested in another form of Exercise. They would have seen two Strangers supping in a Club of which they were not members, and into which they had gained entrance by methods which remain occult. Half a bottle of Claret and a Gin and Soda were refreshing the performers of this mystic feat. They also seem to have had a little congratulatory supper. And, to further celebrate the accomplishment of what would seem to have been a pre-arranged purpose, they went to the Bar. Here they ordered a Gin and Soda and a bottle of Bass. As is usual on Entertainment nights, many people besides the Mysterious Visitors were thirsty. The Barmaid was busy, but something in the appearance of these Particular Customers seems to have struck her. Their success

in gaining admittance to the Club possibly affected them, now that they stood at the Bar, and in the full light of that august Institution they did not look as if they were Members. They were asked point blank whether they were.

Subsequent events would seem to show, strange to relate, that this natural question was precisely the one which the two Gallants had all the evening been coyly anxious to avoid. It went so straight (it can only be supposed) to the object of their enterprising visit, that it threatened to ring down the curtain on a Charade before the fitting moment had come. To say "that which is not" is a school-boy offence. It falls beneath the dignity of the Artist. But to the Artist, when his text does not appeal to him, or he forgets his words, a gesture, however melancholy, may be permitted. One of our Masqueraders made one. He put down the money. It would now seem that from our Men of Mystery's point of view, the evening had been satisfactory. They had effected an unopposed entrance into a Club of which they were not Members; had not been discovered in their sprightly joke; and by paying for refreshments which they had no right to pay for, had put the victims of their pleasantry in an illegal position. Yet they were not satisfied wholly. Whether, as Artists, they were under the direction of an Actor Manager who thought that this initial performance lacked "finish," and felt another representation needful for the success of the play; or whether, as Artists, they had some fear of a certain Judicial Critic, whose opinion is final, and costs more than two pounds ten; or whether as Actors of an elaborate practical joke they were prompted to

THE BAR

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repetition from sheer love of fun—can never be certainly known. The fact however remains, that, animated by one or other of these incentives, they again entered the Club by tickets—which no one knew how they got—on the night of May the First.

On this occasion (such is often Industry's reward) they fell short of their former measure of Success. They ordered, indeed, the same drinks (a gin and soda, and a bottle of Bass), but they were from some mysterious cause unable to carry the performance through to a satisfactory conclusion. Either some species of Stage Fright assailed them at a pinch (which seems impossible); or they had left home without their Prompt Copy; or, what is more probable, they thought that like the man in the Melodrama, they "were observed." For when the Barmaid asked one of them whether he was a Member—we had almost written that he had remained speechless, but he said "No." "Then you know that you are not allowed to pay," said the Barmaid. And she did not serve them. The Strangers therefore left the premises without having assuaged their thirst. If, however, they had been unable to get a gin and soda and a bottle of Bass, they now hung out their true colours, and the display of the comforting Ensign of the Excise was the signal for the bringing of an action at law against the National Sporting Club. Whether such an attention on the part of the Authorities is to be considered a compliment or a vexation is a matter of opinion. The action at law was however brought. On the grounds on which it *was* brought it failed. And these grounds, since they have been judicially disposed of, can be stated without fear of falling into the arms of the Goddess Libel.

An attempt then (no doubt inspired by zeal for the Public Welfare) was made to show that the National Sporting Club was in the habit (through its servants) of supplying refreshments to non-members, for which they paid illegally. In plain words, two able and expert officers of the Excise had hoped, by ordering a gin and soda and a bottle of Bass, and by putting their money down without replying when asked whether they were Members, to have turned an Ethical Somersault, and to have brought the Club under the expensive admonitions of Somerset House. But this ambition, natural in active Agents, was not gratified. There were flaws in the execution of the scheme too pronounced to escape the Judicial eye. It was distinctly held by the Magistrate, who presided at the case, that the officer's putting down of his money, when asked if he was a Member, was equivalent to his saying "Yes," which was equivalent to saying—what we are too polite to put into words. And it was allowed conclusively that the Club had taken all proper precautions. It might now have been thought by those of the least sanguine temperament that the case had ended in a victory all along the line for the Club Authorities. Two experts had come forward to prove that the National Sporting Club sold drink on occasions in an unlicensed manner, and a skilfully conducted attack on the conduct of an Establishment had ended in a proof that its servants adhered to its rules undeviatingly; that they did *not* sell drinks in an unlicensed manner; and that orders to that effect were posted up all over the Club's Walls. The Club seemed to have reason for rejoicing, and Somerset House, with all due respect be it said, an equal cause for

being depressed. But only for a moment. If the triumph of common sense may have been supposed to make Official tears flow, the triumph of something else was presently to turn tears into congratulations. The Law of England is a power which has been unkindly spoken of by great men. Oliver Cromwell said that it was an Ungodly jumble. The late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn was much annoyed at another legal luminary's description of it as a force often seen triumphing over a prostrate Justice; while a great genius who often had to correct the tendencies of his own times (and whose works might be studied by contemporaries with unspeakable benefit to themselves) comments on its involved procedure in this simple parable. Having described himself as possessor of a cow, which a neighbour has a mind to, he finds himself, as the rightful owner, lying under great disadvantage in defending his obvious title. Amongst many other complaints of the law's tendencies, he notices a tedious dwelling upon all circumstances which are not to the purpose. In this simple case of a neighbour wishing to appropriate his cow, no desire is evinced to know what title or claim his adversary has to it; but questions are raised as to whether the cow is red or black; whether her horns are long or short; whether the fields in which she grazes are round or square; whether she is milked at home or abroad; what diseases she is subject to. After which precedents are consulted and the case is adjourned.

It is not our purpose to draw an invidious comparison between the case of Jonathan Swift and his cow and Alfred Cope and the National Sporting Club. It may be remarked in passing, however, that as the ownership of Swift's cow

seemed to be the point at issue, and not as to whether it was red or black, or as to whether the field it grazed in was round or square, so the case of Cope *v.* The National Sporting Club seemed to depend on whether that officer had succeeded in being served on the premises in an unlicensed manner, and not as to what was the legal definition of the word Sale, or Intoxicating Liquor, or as to whether the alleged sale to Cope was a sale within the meaning of a statute framed years ago to meet a perfectly different contingency.

The result, however, of a legal discussion on irrelevant technicalities, brought about an appeal on the part of the Club from a magisterial decision. And in spite of Swift's declaration that precedents were cases cited to prove a contrary opinion, and in spite of it having been conclusively proved that all precautions had been taken to prevent the officer buying drinks in an illegal manner, the following mysterious, but no doubt tasty *menu*, was set before a Superior Court :—

Dinner à la Russe, October 30th, 1899.

Graff *v.* Evans, 8 Q.B.D. 373.
Newell *v.* Hemingway, 58 L.J.M.C. 314.
Newman *v.* Jones, 17 Q.B.D. 132.
Bard *v.* Evans, 21 Q.B.D. 249.
Bowyer *v.* Percy Supper Club, 1893, 2 Q.B. 154.
John Foster and Sons *v.* Commissioners of Inland Revenue, 1894, 1 Q.B. 516.
Coleman *v.* Mills, 61 J.P. 102.
Lyman *v.* O'Reilly, L.B. (Ireland), 1898, vol. ii. p. 48.
Sale of Goods Act, 1893, s. 1, sub-sec. 1.

In spite of the temptation to wander from one irrelevance to another supplied by this seductive Bill of Fare, the Superior Court made it very plain

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that they had decided views on the main point at issue. And that was that the National Sporting Club (through their servants) had *not* been seduced into infringing the Law by Cope's engaging *bonhomie*. Things looked black for the Excise, and Somerset House threatened once more to be on the Shelf. Something had to be done, and quickly, to stem the tide setting so strongly to the one point at issue. Oracular whispers were heard; all sorts of remedies were suggested. Interpretings and Glossings joined in a legal embrace. At last deliverance came, not in the form of a mouse, but in a slight flaw in the National Sporting Club's Articles of Association. To speak without disrespect to Lawyers, but to reduce to plain terms what Swift most irreverently calls "that peculiar cant and jargon of their own, which no other mortal can understand, and wherein all their laws are written which they take special care to multiply," this is what occurred.

1. The Excise officers, acting no doubt under direction of the Authorities, were declared to have failed in their efforts to tempt the N.S.C. servants to infringe the Law by selling refreshments to non-members.

2. The sale of intoxicating liquors to Shareholders of the Company who were also Members of the Club was held to be a proper sale to Members of their own property.

But (and this is where the flaw came in) some of the Shareholders of the Company, though originally Members of the Club, *had subsequently resigned their membership*, or were dead. Therefore the sale of liquor at the N.S.C., though a sale to Shareholders, was not a sale to Members. The result was, that owing to a slip in framing the

Articles of Association, or, in other words, owing to not having forecast the possible death or resignation of people who *were* Club Members when the Articles were framed, an action against the Club, after having been Equitably put out of Court, was allowed to triumph Legally by a technicality.

We learn from *Gulliver's Travels* that no law made by the inhabitants of Brobdignag was allowed to exceed in words the number of letters in their alphabet, which consisted only of two-and-twenty. The law was to be expressed in the most plain and simple terms. The people were not mercurial enough to discover above one interpretation to it, and to write a comment upon it was a capital crime. Here is an ideal legislative condition to which we cannot hope to attain. But in the absence of a Brobdignagian Digest or a Code Napoleon it would be something gained towards a more universal reverence for our legal system if every case (and there have been very many) which has ended in a verdict of Law triumphant, and Common Sense prostrate, had had the advantage of some such disclosure as we have offered of the preliminaries which helped to the result.

When one of the greatest lawyers who ever adorned the Woolsack remarked that "he had summed up heavily against Eternal Punishment and dismissed Hell with Costs," he reasonably complimented himself on a philanthropic day's work. Ours has been in comparison a very minor endeavour; but some part of it will have been attained if we have been able to show how, in the existing state of affairs, a technical slip may turn Victory into Defeat, and how, under cover of

Official Duties, something very like an attempt may be made on the Liberties of the Subject. With the enterprising industry of the Excise Officers we have no affair. Lucretius himself asked what *Duty* was, and if such a philosopher was doubtful when on the point of Death, no one has any cause to complain if Government servants are zealous. Their activity on this occasion, we must be permitted to think, was misdirected. But it cost the National Sporting Club £500, after some involved and contradictory actions at Law, and as the labourer is worthy of his hire, we have no hesitation in offering Somerset House our congratulations. For, if a misdirected energy in our opinion was theirs, no lack of Zeal can be imputed to them.

II

THE QUAINT QUADRANGLES OF THE LAW

A CONSIDERATION OF LAWYERS AND BOXERS, EMBODIED IN TWO TEXTS AND A HUMBLE DISCOURSE

NOTE.—Since this chapter has been in the press the occurrence of another regrettable Boxing Fatality has resulted in Legal Proceedings, prolonged to a trial at the Old Bailey, which, after an exhaustive inquiry, has resulted in a triumphant acquittal of the Defendants engaged.

The full report of this last trial is chronicled later on. In it the sound, common-sense view of a strong and eminently English Judge will be found to suggest the certainty that the points at issue have been finally decided, and that in the event (*absit omen*) of another accident occurring, the Treasury, relying on the Coroner's verdict of Accidental Death, will move no more in the direction of vexatious and ineffectual prosecution.

And indeed, in the light of this subsequent event, this chapter is only allowed to stand because singularly enough it indicates, in language necessarily poor in comparison, that very line of dealing with a regrettable accident from the platform of plain common sense, which was followed with such marked success by the brilliant advocates of the Club.

Photo by *Elliott & Fry.*

THE LATE SIR CHARLES HALL, Q.C.

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THE TWO TEXTS

1.—There is absolutely nothing illegal in Boxing itself. It is indeed a noble and manly art, which I hope will never die out of this country.—SIR CHARLES HALL, Q.C., Recorder, November 21st, 1898.

2.—Boxing has received the sanction of high legal authority, no less an authority than the late Lord Bramwell, who said in a case tried before him a great many years ago (The Queen *v.* Young and others) that a sparring match with gloves, fairly conducted, was not unlawful; but a sparring match might become unlawful if the men fought on till they were so weak that a dangerous fall or blow was likely to be the result. . . . This contest took place at the National Sporting Club, under the rules regulating such contests, and was conducted apparently with perfect fairness. Several witnesses deposed that the combatants were fairly matched, and that it was intended to be an Exhibition of Skill.—SIR FORREST FULTON, Common Serjeant, charging the Jury, owing to the death of Sir Charles Hall, March 12th, 1900.

THE HUMBLE DISCOURSE

The object of the National Sporting Club is to promote the science of Boxing. In this endeavour all that practised knowledge, skill, and care can do to attain the end aimed at in the fairest and safest manner has been, and is being done. The strictest adherence to accepted rules is rigidly enforced. The presence of the Authorities on Monday nights is not only invited, but is an insistive condition to the programme being carried out, and the Club Record testifies indisputably to

these facts. Accidents, however, occur in the best-regulated Rings. They occur also on racecourses, polo grounds, the ice, football fields, theatrical stages, and the tops of omnibuses. Three of these accidents have unfortunately occurred at the National Sporting Club. They have in due course come under the Notice of the Lawyers. And one of them, taken at random, is now going to come under the notice of ourselves. It is obvious that we shall look at it from a different point of view to the lawyers hitherto engaged. It is possible that we shall look at it with an equal amount of Common Sense. We have, at any rate, fortified ourselves with two texts taken from their own mouth to keep ourselves within limits. And an initial case for Inquiry may at once be stated. A fatality occurs during a boxing match at the Club. In what position do the Manager, the Proprietors, the Principals, the Referee, and other officials, find themselves with regard to the Authorities, when this accident overtakes them as they are endeavouring not to let an art die out which has been declared a noble and manly one by a late Recorder of London, and which has been from the Bench pronounced not unlawful by no less an authority than the late Lord Bramwell?

They are treated like felons taken in the act. All the machinery of justice is at once put in force against them in the most open way. The police appear on the Club premises and demand to see the Manager, the Referee, the Timekeeper, the Principals, the Seconds, and, as far as we can make out, anyone else who happens to have an easy conscience and to be on the premises. The people who are "wanted," not believing them-

selves caught in the commission of premeditated homicide, are not hiding under beds or scaling slate roofs. On the contrary, they are waiting quietly in the Club hall for the officials who they themselves have sent for. They are upon this severally and collectively charged with the heinous crime of Manslaughter, and are then and there marched off to Bow Street.

As has been already indicated in the chapter devoted to the Past History of the Club, Bow Street was once a fashionable promenade. Mantuas floated along its pavements and Billet-doux were handed at every turn. It may be doubted, however, whether the Bond Street of Covent Garden appears in this light to the several gentlemen thus arrested for an offence which they never dreamt of committing, when Mantuas have turned into policemen's capes and Billet-doux into a charge of manslaughter.

Nor can the accompanying crowd of newsvendors, preparing to roar the latest news, and of artisans whose daily toil it is to watch the ingress and egress of notorious criminals, be an added solace to this public passing to a police station of honest citizens who have committed no crime that they are aware of.

All journeys have their endings, however, whatever inconveniences may be encountered on the way. Amidst encouraging cries, indicative of public interest in a crime, at last a haven opens. Stout doors clang behind the party, a subterranean passage is negotiated, an atmosphere strangely fetid becomes strikingly noticeable, and a moment after the Manager of a Club which is honestly devoted to "not letting a lawful, noble, and manly art die out of England," finds himself and his

associates in the dock once graced by Jonathan Wild. The next thing he has to do is to try and look as if he had not committed a murder, and then to find bail for himself for £100. His companions in supposed guilt have to be equally inquisitive in proportion. And then, as the Inquest has not been held yet, and noboby knows precisely what has or has not happened, the unfortunate company is enlarged again on their own or their friends' recognizances for another public promenade. By this time Rumour has scoured Covent Garden. The pavements are thronged with sightseers whose favourite spectacle is crime escaping, if even only temporarily, from a policeman. The newspaper men are on the alert; the artist is probably busy; and, such is the kindly promptness of modern enterprise, that it is quite possible for the man whose occupation has been declared praiseworthy by a Recorder of London to have a murderous portrait of himself thrust under his nose before he can regain the shelter of the Club premises.

The Inquest having now been held, and the jury having, after less than two minutes' deliberation, returned a verdict of Accidental Death (adding a rider that the National Sporting Club had taken every reasonable precaution to prevent such an occurrence), the time has come for the Manager of that Establishment and his coadjutors to surrender to their bail at Bow Street and show cause why they should not be committed to take their trial on the charge of Manslaughter. It is not our purpose to follow in detail the Police Court proceedings which ensued. This work was undertaken for the ends of amusement and edifying, and there seems no reason why we should inflict our

readers with legal tortuosities so long as they can lay hands on a Copy of the Statutes at Large.

Moreover, we have in our chapter on no less a classic subject than Excise, quoted the opinions held on legal methods by the greatest genius that ever devoted himself to public affairs. Swift's views have been given on the great question as to whether the neighbour's cow was black or white, or had crumpled horns or straight ones. The conundrum as to what is "a place" within the meaning of an Act has been dealt with by later and lesser lights. Nor do we propose to add smoke to the darkness by being inquisitive as to what may be a Punch or what may not be one. Our method is the method of plain men—namely, the setting out of plain facts plainly, and we shall now put on record a simple table of the evidence given by a variety of witnesses on oath, and unadorned with any legal jargon whatever.

On the question, then, as to whether Arthur F. Bettinson, Manager of the National Sporting Club, Bernard John Angle, Stockbroker, and others should be sent to take their trial for the manslaughter of Mike Riley, the following testimony was tendered by—

MATTHEW PRECIOUS (*Professional Boxer, the deceased man's opponent in the fatal contest, and who ought to know something of what happened*): "I cannot remember any especially hard blow I struck which was likely to cause Riley's death. I regarded the contest as scientific."

JOHN BOYLE (*the deceased boxer's trainer, a practical expert*): "I can't say there was any heavy punishment. It was very scientific boxing. I did not notice any heavy blows. They were good, ordinary, sharp blows—scientific."

MR. G. A. HAMMERTON (*Divisional Surgeon of E Division of Police, an expert at all events on what damage*

can be done by a truncheon): "A blow such as given in Ordinary Boxing would do the injury. An ordinary blow would be sufficient."

ERNEST JACKSON LANG, ESQ., M.R.C.S.: "It was a light-weight boxing match, depending solely upon the skill of the winner. It was an exhibition of skill and nothing else."

DR. GILBERT LYNCH: "No severe blow was noticeable to me throughout the contest."

EDGAR NUTTALL (*Journalist*): "I failed to observe any blow during the contest which was given with more than moderate vigour."

REGINALD JOHN WILSON (*House Surgeon at Charing Cross Hospital*): "It would not require a severe blow to cause the injury."

ALFRED DARLING (*ex-Chief Constable of Metropolitan Police*): "It was a light contest."

Here we have the evidence given on oath of people who were actually present when the fatality occurred.

Next comes the opinions of two counsel in opposing interests, who were not present, but who as expert lawyers are surely capable of judging of the purport of evidence, if anybody since Solomon or Lord Somers can.

MR. H. F. BODKIN (*Prosecuting Counsel instructed by the Treasury, and therefore not professionally friendly to the interests of the National Sporting Club*): "The evidence in this case will show that there was not that appearance of fierceness which would lead one to think that one or other of the lads wanted to win early in the fight."

MR. CHARLES MATTHEWS (*Counsel for the Defence*): "There is no evidence whatever of there having been what is called a 'knock-out blow' throughout the contest. It is perfectly useless to discuss this aspect."

Who runs may read. Here are a Divisional Surgeon of the E Division of Police, an ex-Chief Inspector of Police, a Member of the Royal College

GILBERT LYNCH, M.D.

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of Surgeons, a Doctor of Medicine, a Professional Trainer, a Journalist, a House Surgeon of Charing Cross Hospital, a Boxer who was a principal, stating on oath severally—

(1) That an ordinary blow would be sufficient to cause the injury.

(2) That it was a light contest.

(3) That it was a light-weight boxing match depending solely upon the skill of the winner. It was an exhibition of skill and nothing else.

(4) That no severe blow was noticeable through the contest.

(5) It was very scientific boxing. No heavy blows came under my notice. They were ordinary, good, sharp blows—scientific.

(6) It would require no severe blow to cause the injury.

(7) I cannot remember any hard blow I struck which was likely to cause Riley's death. I regarded the contest as scientific.

We also have the opinion of the Prosecuting Counsel that there was no evidence of fierceness in the contest, or any appearance of one or other of the lads wanting to win early in its course—coupled with the decided expression of the Counsel for the Defence that there was no evidence whatever of there having been a knock-out blow; and that to *discuss this aspect was perfectly useless.*

And then on the top of all this storm of testimony, given by eye-witnesses, and on oath, that the contest was one conducted on strictly scientific and

therefore on strictly lawful lines, comes this astonishing dictum from the Bench.

The Magistrate: "This appears to me clearly to have been a fight. These men were doing their best to win. They were doing their best to *Knock each other* out."

Law triumphant! Common Sense prostrate! Sworn Testimony rolling in the gutter! Such are the exclamations which rise to the plain man's lips on reading this astounding finding, which suggests in the plainest possible way that everybody who had given evidence had said the thing which was not. However, Arthur F. Bettinson, Esq. (Manager of the National Sporting Club), Bernard John Angle, Esq. (Stockbroker), and seven others guilty of doing their best to promote a noble and manly art, which the late Recorder of London hoped would never die out of this country, find themselves, in the legal sequence of things, committed to take their trial for Manslaughter at the Old Bailey.

The Old Bailey is known, we understand, among professional frequenters by the agreeable name of the Court of Gaol Delivery. The perusal of its records is at all events not calculated to inspire the innocent with the most agreeable sensations in the world. In our own days many of the most murderous malefactors hung have stood in its dingy dock. In times gone by, its judgment-seat was occupied by no less sinister a personage than the hero of the Bloody Assize. The portrait of Sir George Jeffreys hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, painted by the hand of Kneller, and shows "the Cruel Judge," as the picture is labelled, in the red robes of the Recorder of London. The sighs of his countless victims, the groans of innumerable

innocents unjustly condemned, seem still, to the imaginative mind, to haunt the gloomy Court over which he once abominably presided, with that maniac's glare which made just men tremble, and with the brazen impudence of ten carted Street walkers.

Scroggs also, not unknown to infamy and the robes of the Lord Chief Justice, presided in the same judgment-seat, and followed the recently very inadequately whitewashed footsteps of Jeffreys, with no unequal strides. By this momentary historical retrospect, we convey no imputation naturally on the Court of Common Gaol Delivery, as it is now constituted. Other times, other manners. And the days are past when, on the slightest imputation of a Government Informer, one might expect to feel one's bowels in the Hangman's hands. But if men's evil deeds live after them, the scene of their enactment becomes in a measure infected. And no student of that grotesque mummery of collected Injustice called the State Trials can ever hear the name of the Old Bailey mentioned, without some presentiment of impending miscarriage. But on this occasion, among the public and those qualified professionally to judge, no such suggestion obtained. The magisterial decision at Bow Street was as a story that had been told, and the point which had been conscientiously missed from excess of zeal, was expected to be fully exposed at the second recital. Had it not been from this very Bench of the Old Bailey that the then Recorder of London, in advising the Grand Jury to find no Bill in a similar case, had pronounced his memorable judgment that there was absolutely nothing illegal in Boxing itself, but that it was a noble and manly art which he

hoped would never die out of this country? And acting on this judicial utterance had not the Bill been thrown out by the Grand Jury? It is true that Sir Charles Hall, Q.C., had recently paid the common debt of nature to the regret of all who admired his mingled urbanity and sound common-sense view of life; but to the Common Serjeant, who, on the call of this sad emergency, occupied the vacant bench, a training in the same judicial school had credited an equal perspicacity. In plain words, it was confidently expected that, following in Sir Charles Hall's footsteps, he too would direct the Jury to find no Bill.

Never were anticipations so unexpectedly overthrown. The only parallel in history which occurs to us of so complete an overthrow of public opinion is the conduct of Pitt at the impeachment of Warren Hastings, when, after having upheld the Governor-General's conduct in every particular in which it seemed patently open to condemnation, he told an amazed House of Commons that though he thought Hastings' spoliations justifiable, he should vote for his impeachment because they had been too great. The parallel may escape those unacquainted with Eastern affairs. This plain fact remains: the Common Serjeant, after reciting the high legal sanction that Boxing had received from Lord Bramwell; after allowing that it had been given in evidence that there had been no knock-out blows given by either contestant; that the contest had been merely an exhibition of skill; after further allowing that several witnesses had deposed to this fact (as has already been set out); after further allowing that the contest had taken place at the National Sporting Club under the rules regulating such contests,

Photo by *Windus & Sime.*

SIR FORREST FULTON, K.C.
(THE RECORDER OF LONDON)

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and had been conducted with perfect fairness, then proceeded—

(1) To pay a deserved compliment to the late Sir Charles Hall, who from the same seat had dismissed a similar case with the remark that there was nothing illegal in Boxing, but that it was a noble and manly art which he hoped would never die out of this country. And—

(2) To the amazement of all Spectators — To Advise the Jury to Return a True Bill.

The Grand Jury returned no Bill against the Defendants, who were released from Bail.

Such are the plain facts of a simple case. They carry with them, however, weighty issues; and on the judicial conduct of those facts, so nearly as it did bringing about a grave miscarriage of Justice, we intend here to comment from a common-sense point of view, but in the directest possible manner. Setting aside wise Saws and Legal Axioms, we do not hesitate to declare that, to the Magistrate presiding at Bow Street, in the face of the cumulative sworn evidence put before him—that this was a scientific boxing match and not a prize fight—only two courses remained open: either to accept the sworn testimony of eye-witnesses and Dismiss the case—or, not accepting the testimony of those eye-witnesses on oath (as his decision shows that he did not), to immediately and without more ado advise a Treasury prosecution of the whole batch of them for Perjury.

Facts are stubborn things when simply stated, and no amount of technical subtleties or legal legerdemain can release the Magistrate who presided at

Bow Street from the horns of this dilemma; nor can his associate in perverseness escape from the similarly impossible position in which he sits securely impaled. To quote the sworn testimony of witnesses to the effect that a boxing match was a scientific contest conducted with perfect fairness, and then to direct a Grand Jury to find a True Bill against the defendants for manslaughter, is to say that the so-called scientific boxing match was a Prize Fight, and that the witnesses who had sworn it was a scientific contest had said on oath that which was not — which is to say that they had perjured themselves — which is to say that a Treasury Prosecution was called for.

Anybody can write Q.E.D. after an argument —lawyers included. Meanwhile, Cromwell's remark on the laws of England may be opportunely remembered. His view was that they wanted reforming altogether. Cromwell's lineal successor and counterpart, Napoleon, went a step further. He counted all his matchless victories as nothing compared to his ever-memorable boast, "I shall go down to Posterity with the Code in my hand."

It seems as plain as anything visible can be to us, that if an unprofessional statement of plain facts can lay bare legal contradictions, the sooner a little coding is done to our own laws the better it will be for Boxing, the National Sporting Club, and everybody else concerned in trying to keep English manhood healthy and unimpaired. Let us have something definite. If lawyers cannot tell us what a Place is, and what a Punch is, let an Act of Parliament tell us. If lawyers can't tell us, and Parliament won't tell us, we shall, in the absence of a Cromwell or a Napoleon, be compelled, like

Dickens's character, to do something temporary with a tea-pot. Or we shall be forced, with all humility, to the belief, that as Dogs gnaw bones because they can't swallow them, so certain judges reject facts because they shirk the trouble of Digestion.

III

A SHORT TALK

By A. F. BETTINSON

ON THE DECLINE OF ENGLISH CHAMPIONS

WITH A RECIPE FOR THEIR REVIVAL

IN the progress of my official duties at the National Sporting Club, and in the course of my daily efforts to further an Art which I have fostered, cultivated, and for some time practised for twenty years, I am constantly asked two questions; to which I propose, as plainly as I can, to give a final and definite answer.

(1) What is the reason of the apparent decline in English Boxing?

(2) Why is it that English Champions of to-day invariably meet their match in Champions from America?

Now, the answer to these two questions is really one, and that is the answer to the last. But as this answer entails the necessity of tracing back the

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superiority of American Champions through two generations to a strange and, I fancy, to an unsuspected source, it may be well for me to suggest in the first place that the present apparent decline in English Boxing is little more than one of those passing fluctuations which are natural to any popular Sport. Neither English Cricketers, Footballers, or Jockeys maintain an invariable level of excellence. Unsuccessful years interpose themselves between periods of prosperity, and records very often show with regard to these sports that the very moment of apparently hopeless decline is in reality the moment of Revival.

Signs, indeed, point out to an eye not altogether unpractised in noting such symptoms, that as far as English Boxing is concerned the moment of revival is upon us. To begin with the foundations of things and men, the form shown this year by Public Schools has been characterised by very marked improvement. At the Army Boxing Competitions the same welcome advance in the right direction has manifested itself. And if the Competitions inaugurated some time since at the National Sporting Club, and carried on unintermittently under no lack of difficulty, have not hitherto succeeded in unearthing a coming champion, promise has at least had an opportunity of displaying itself, which may develop in due time into something still better.

And so, having suggested that the so-called decline in English Boxing is perhaps more apparent than real, and that if it *is* real, the cause of it lies in one of those natural periods of fluctuation which promises to be even now disappearing, I will pass on to the second question (and one that I am times out of number asked), as to why English Champions

of to-day seem to invariably meet their match in Champions from America?

My answer, I expect, will be unexpected. But it is a plain one. And it is inspired, not only by what I have seen at the N.S.C. of American Boxers, but by what I have seen of them in their own country. When I took Palmer over there in 1889 I fully expected him to beat McGovern. We had a twenty-four-foot ring and exceptionally fair treatment; and here I may tender my thanks to Doc Ordway, who not only assisted other Americans in giving me a most excellent time, but whom I also have to thank for sending us over some very good Boxers here.

Well, what I saw of American methods gives me a plain answer to a vital question. I do not hesitate to say that the American Boxers show their superiority over the English ones, because the Americans have themselves unconsciously absorbed and put into practice that very style and those very tactics which once made English Boxers the superiors of the World. I say that why English Boxers are beaten by Americans is because as Boxers they have discarded their own style. And what is more singular is that they still remain obstinately unaware of it. The process by which this shuffling of cards has come about, though it lies a little under the surface of things, is not difficult to trace, and a very brief survey of the past will, I believe, make a strange fact as plain as a fact can be made.

In the first place I may lay it down as an undeniable maxim that, though this is an age when everybody has a new style or a new invention, there is only one style in Boxing. That style found

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probably its most perfect exponent in the person of Jem Mace. The deeds of this champion in the ring are still fresh in the memories of our older generation of Sportsmen. Everybody who cares about Boxing can read of his victories, and anybody who wishes to see the practical method by which they were secured can be gratified on the intermittent occasions when the still evergreen champion goes Sparring. And it is to Jem Mace's method and tactics that the present generation of American Boxers owe their superiority to our own.

The fact—for so I take it to be, after long consideration—seems a distant one. It must be followed in its practical workings through two Continents. The first of these is Australia. As is generally known, Mace went to this country at the close of his active career as a pugilist in England. He made Sydney his headquarters, and became the proprietor of a big hotel (?) with a Boxing Saloon attached. Strange as it may seem, to this Boxing Saloon at the back of Mace's premises in Sydney, N.S.W., may be traced the first step in a continuous movement which has resulted to-day in the superiority of American and Australian Boxers over Englishmen. The progress of the movement may be easily traced. In this saloon at Sydney, Mace taught Larry Foley all that he knew of the Art of Self-Defence, which was everything worth knowing. And in Larry Foley he found not only an apt, but a consummate pupil. Larry Foley in his turn became a teacher, and what Mace had done for him he did for Peter Jackson, Fitzsimmons, Hall, Creedon, and young Griffo. This is the end of the first movement

in the development I propose to trace, and with the end of it, finishes the connection with Australia.

America now becomes the stage of the history. Full of that knowledge which he had gained from Larry Foley, and which Larry Foley had gained from Jem Mace, Peter Jackson arrives at San Francisco. He makes a long and successful stay there, with his headquarters at a Club which was then considered as a boxing Centre second to none in America. His style, his ring tactics, are universally admired, and their value and superiority to all others are frequently demonstrated in the best place for viewing such a display. It is recognised that in Peter Jackson a new man has arrived with a good style, and this feeling spreads throughout the whole of the American continent as the ebony champion makes his triumphant progress through it. Meanwhile Larry Foley's other pupils—that is to say, Fitzsimmons, Hall, Creedon, and young Griffo—have also arrived from Australia. As new men with a new style, and that the most effective one, they meet with hardly less approbation and success than Jackson has done. But —and here comes the pith of the matter, after all—what is this new style which has made such a success in a country always ready to grasp at novelty? It is nothing but Larry Foley's style, which was nothing but Jem Mace's style—which was nothing but the most consummate of *English* styles at the very meridian of English Boxing!

There are, however, exceptions to every rule, and a certain amount of controverting matter to every main argument. Therefore, while on the

Photo by *Ed. Sharp.*

BOB FITZSIMMONS

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subject of America, and to show that I am not a bigoted theorist, it is only fair to point out that, apart from the influx from Australia of Boxers trained in the English style, America had been previously prepared to accept the true doctrine, by an importation of Boxers direct from England. Amongst many well-known names, two will occur at once to any student of the Noble Art. Billy Edwards (Manchester) and Arthur Chambers each took the correct, English, and only style of Boxing straight to America from the Mother Country. Both of them were first-class men. Both fought Bat Mullins under Prize-Ring Rules. Edwards, who was always looked on as a particularly clever and finished boxer, I had the pleasure of meeting at Hoffmann House, during my visit to the States. And I met in him, not only the expert in his art which his Record testifies to, but a quiet and courteous gentleman. Subject to the above exception, my main argument may now proceed on its direct course.

Quick people seize hold of a good thing without being careful to know where it comes from. The advantages or disadvantages of a style of boxing can be easily judged by experts, to say nothing of being felt. And the Americans are by temperament extraordinarily alert at imitating and adapting themselves to what their common sense tells them is a profitable invention. The style, therefore, of Peter Jackson, Fitzsimmons, Hall, Creedon, young Griffo, which was the style of Larry Foley, which was the style of Jem Mace, becomes the standard of every boxer in the States who has the capacity for adapting himself and the ambition to be a Champion. The method and

the tactics which proved too much for Joe Goss and Bob Brettle and Bob Travers, and which many are of opinion would have proved too much for Tom Sayers (had opportunity offered itself), are drained in by the rising generation of American boxers as easily as children drain their mother's milk. America is saturated gradually but surely with a style of boxing which was originally essentially English; and the second movement in the development I am tracing finishes its connection with America.

England now becomes the stage of the history. The Boxing Revival with us has just been born. We have an English Champion who is supposed by some judges to be worthy to rank with the great ones of the past, and who has to look for further laurels abroad. Everybody interested in Boxing is agog for an International Contest. They are soon accommodated with one. Peter Jackson arrives in England from America, representing at that time the very best that Country could produce in the way of heavy-weights. He proved a great deal too good for our own. Nor when we pocketed our disappointment and went lower down the scale did our middle-weights, our light-weights, or our feather-weights (with a brilliant exception or two which does not affect the main argument) fare any better against importations supposititiously American.

The above list of defeats is sufficiently disconcerting to anyone not possessed of the stoicism of a Roman Senator. Nor is it a matter for wonder that I am so often asked why English Champions of to-day so invariably meet their match in Champions from America. But my answer is a simple

one. I have followed the clue to the disagreeable mystery through two continents, and I do not hesitate to declare it no mystery at all. English Champions only meet their match to-day in American Champions because they have discarded the only real style in Boxing; and because in American Champions they meet opponents who have made themselves proficient in that only real style, having drawn it, through Larry Foley and Australia, directly from James Mace.

A few minor questions springing from this argument offer themselves for discussion.

It may be asked in the first place how it is that our English Boxers, with that clear perception of the superiority of Americans and Australians, which by this time *must* be before their eyes—for they have many of them felt very tangible proofs of it—have not learnt a lesson from experience, and made some efforts to model themselves on their masters. The answer is that in many cases English Boxers *have* made this effort; but, grotesquely enough, either from insular wrongheadedness, or from lack of appreciation of the vital point, they have imitated just those features in the style of their rivals which they had much better have left alone altogether. Two instances of this imitative perversity will illustrate my meaning. To all who have seen Peter Jackson's exhibitions in the Ring the peculiar stooping posture of the great heavy-weight while in the act of feinting will be perfectly familiar. Upon this none too elegant mannerism many of our English Boxers have seized, as if it was the very inmost secret of the art which has brought Jackson to fame, instead of a trick which rather disfigures an almost perfect style than otherwise. And in this unfortu-

nate selection of the undesirable for copy, they forget that their model is a tall and lithe nigger, with a quite exceptional length of reach, which keeps him quite out of that danger incurred by stooping which they are absolutely certain to run into. A more ludicrous instance of choosing the points in a lesson which have nothing to do with the issue, may be mentioned in the case of our Boxers who model themselves on Frank Craig. On what points of the Coffee Cooler's methods do they fix the eye of study? On his exceptionally clever foot work? On the wonderful use which he makes of a long reach? On his tricky ring tactics? On his noticeable capacity for two-handed fighting? Not at all! On what trait of the Coffee Cooler's, then, do his English admirers keep their eyes fixed, and what especial virtue in his style have they marked out for sincere imitation? His habit of Chewing Gum! Here again is a not especially elegant trick in a master, nor has it in any perceptible way paved the path to the master's triumphs. But his English disciples do not seem to see this, and they go on gum-chewing all the same.

The other minor question arising from my main argument is as to whether, in face of this American and Australian supremacy (got as I have shown originally from an English source), we have nothing in the way of English talent to offer as a solatium. In answer to this I can only say that there are freaks in the Boxing World as well as in Nature, and that of these natural representatives of style I can name two who, in my opinion, have earned the title to pre-eminence, and yet both of which two are hampered by fatal defects. Pedlar Palmer's quite exceptional and natural cleverness is in a great

TERRY McGOVERN

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degree rendered of no effect by his lack of hitting power. This he found a fatal defect in his fight with Terry McGovern, who is not only a particularly straight (old style) and rapid hitter, and good on his legs, but is evidently, from the way in which he has since been giving weight to everyone, a Boxer of quite exceptional strength of build; and Toff Wall, who was absolutely one of the cleverest middle-weights that ever put on the gloves, but who from never finding his heart, or his purse, in the right place, had a fatal dislike for the Job.

And so we are left beaten for the time being by a style which was originally our own; which was taught by one of our greatest of English Champions, and which, having gone round the world, has been brought back again under another name to teach *us*. I sincerely hope we shall in time profit by the lesson. I have faith in the future. But of this I feel certain, that trace the quality which is wanted to ensure success to what source you will—call it by what name you please—there is one thing needed to ensure success against our foreign opponents. That one thing is style. By style I mean that method of boxing which in its absolute naturalness carries with it the most effect by velocity and power of hitting combined with quickness and ease of movement on the feet. This is the only correct style, and it was and is essentially English.

IV

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

Before Mr. JUSTICE GRANTHAM

REX *v.* ROBERTS AND OTHERS

Friday, June 28th, 1901.

Jack Roberts, Arthur Frederick Bettinson, John Herbert Douglas, Eugene Corri, Arthur Gutteridge, Arthur Lock, William Chester, William Baxter, Benjamin Jordan, and Harry Greenfield for, on the 24th of April last, feloniously killing and slaying Murray Livingstone, otherwise "Billy Smith."

Mr. R. D. Muir and Mr. Bodkin appeared for the Prosecution. Mr. Charles Gill, K.C., and Mr. Charles Mathews appeared for Bettinson, Douglas, and Corri, and Mr. Marshall, K.C., and Mr. Guy Stephenson appeared for the other Defendants, instructed by Mr. George Lea, who has acted as Solicitor to the N.S.C. from the day of its institution; who had a considerable share in founding it; and who is rightly looked upon as one of its best-known and most popular members.

Soon after half-past ten Mr. Muir reopened the case on behalf of the Treasury. He said the prosecution was undertaken rather with the view of putting a stop to future competitions of this kind than to get any punishment inflicted upon the Defendants. By their verdict the jury would have to say whether competitions of this

MR. G. C. LEA

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character, involving risk to human life, should be continued in the future or not. Their verdict should be guided by this. If the competition carried out under the rules of the club was unlawful, then undoubtedly the defendants were criminally responsible for the death of Smith. But, on the other hand, if it was a lawful contest, in the course of which death accidentally ensued, then the Defendants were not guilty on this indictment. The case for the Prosecution was that this was in fact a fight. The National Sporting Club existed for the purpose of encouraging boxing amongst professional boxers. It was not suggested that there was anything unlawful or unfair in the rules which governed these competitions, or anything calculated to cause injury to life. The contest, one of fifteen rounds, proceeded until the seventh round, when Smith, who had been leading on points, fell, and apparently struck his head against a portion of the ring. He failed to come up to time, and, at the expiration of ten seconds, was counted out. He was removed to Charing Cross Hospital, where he died, never having regained consciousness. The post-mortem examination revealed a laceration of the brain, which had caused death. The jury must draw their own inference as to how the injury of the brain was caused. It did not matter in law whether it was caused by a blow directly delivered by Roberts, or was the result of a fall on the floor, if the contest was illegal. If a person in the commission of an unlawful act accidentally caused death, this did not affect the question of guilt. He submitted that, if it was a question of one competitor trying to knock his opponent out of time, so that he could not rise at the expiration of ten seconds, then this was in reality a prize fight, and as such illegal; but, on the other hand, if the parties were only trying to show how often, and on what part of the body, each could hit the other without intending to hurt him, then it was lawful sport, and they ought not to be held responsible for any fatal consequences which ensued. It was perfectly clear from the rules governing this contest that each of the combatants was trying, either by skill or sheer strength, to knock the other out of time. The rules were in a printed pamphlet published by the club. The evidence showed

that each of the competitors hit as hard as he could. It was obvious that one desired to knock the other out.

In reply to Mr. Justice Grantham, Mr. Muir explained that the backer of the winner of the contest lifted the stakes—the contestants themselves had nothing to do with the stakes.

The Judge: Then it is nothing but a bet?

Mr. Muir: Nothing but a bet.

The Judge: So it would be to the backer's interest that the man whom he backed should win?

Mr. Muir: Yes.

Counsel, in conclusion, said they ought not to consider the consequences of a conviction to the Defendants. The real importance depending on their verdict was that if they decided that this contest was a legal contest, then they might go on in the future *ad infinitum* with like danger to life and limb, but if the jury were satisfied that this was in reality a prize fight, then in the interests of all true sport these contests ought to be stopped.

The evidence given at the former trial was repeated, and at the close of the Case for Prosecution Mr. Gill put the Defendant Mr. J. H. Douglas into the Witness Box.

John Herbert Douglas (one of the Defendants) (sworn) examined by Mr. Gill, K.C.

Mr. Gill: You are a timber merchant of Old Broad Street, and I think you have taken an interest in boxing for a great many years?

Witness: I have.

Mr. Gill: Over what period have you been interested in boxing?

Witness: Since 1875.

Mr. Gill: Were you yourself an amateur boxer?

Witness: I was.

Mr. Gill: Did you compete at the championship meeting?

Witness: Yes, I did. I won three years running—1875, 1876, and 1877.

Mr. Gill: And I think the taste in your family is hereditary? Your son is this year the public school champion?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: Since that time in 1875 down to the present

time have you been present at a very large number of contests and competitions?

Witness: Yes, very many hundreds.

Mr. Gill: Have you acted as Judge upon many occasions?

Witness: Yes, very frequently, and Referee.

Mr. Gill: Purely, of course, in a voluntary capacity?

Witness: Certainly, just for the love of the sport.

Mr. Gill: Mention some of the competitions where you have been present.

Witness: I have judged at the Amateur Boxing Competitions.

Mr. Justice Grantham: We do not doubt his skill as a boxer and his position.

Mr. Gill: Just mention some.

Witness: The Amateur Boxing Championships and all the boxing competitions in London.

Mr. Gill: Can you give me any sort of rough idea how many men you have seen in the ring?

Witness: It would want a long calculation; I should think thousands.

Mr. Gill: Taking the whole of your twenty-five years' experience and the thousands of competitions you have witnessed and judged, have you ever seen a fatal result follow?

Witness: I have never even seen a serious accident until this unfortunate case.

Mr. Gill: Have you seen a number of competitions and contests at the National Sporting Club?

Witness: Yes, I have been going there pretty regularly since about the previous winter to this one.

Mr. Gill: Have you acted as Referee?

Witness: Yes, to pretty nearly all of them. I have missed occasionally, when it did not suit my convenience to get there.

Mr. Gill: Over what period is that? Twelve months?

Witness: It is only a winter season; it is half one season and two-thirds or three-quarters of the last one.

Mr. Gill: Have you seen a great number of contests and competitions?

Witness: A great many.

Mr. Gill: Were they conducted under the same rules as this contest in which Smith and Roberts were engaged?

Witness: Yes, precisely the same.

Mr. Gill: On the night in question you were the Referee to decide the question of the superiority of these men?

Witness: I was.

Mr. Gill: Did you see them both before the contest?

Witness: I did. I had a conversation with them and I cautioned them about boxing fairly, and doing anything that was underhand or anything of that sort, and the two men said, "Oh, there is no fear about that, sir; we are the best of friends, and we only want to see who is the better boxer." I said, "All right, as long as you box fair it is all right, but if you do anything unfair I shall disqualify you without any further warning."

Mr. Gill: And you have absolute discretion as Referee?

Witness: I have absolute discretion.

Mr. Gill: I understand the practice is, as has already been described, you have a card upon which you mark the number of points that you give to the two people in each round?

Witness: That is so.

Mr. Gill: Will you just describe to my Lord the principle on which you award the points?

Witness: The principle is this. The better of the two competitors, whether he may be a good better or a bad better, we give him five points.

Mr. Justice Grantham: I do not quite follow that—a good better or a bad better?

Witness: I mean to say they may be boxing well or indifferently, but whether they are boxing better or worse they have five points, or *pro ratio* four, or three, or two, or one.

Mr. Gill: Then two men boxing, when they have boxed for three minutes you notice for that one round which is the better of the two?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: And you allot them the advantage in points, half a point, or two points, according to what you have observed.

Witness: That is so.

Mr. Gill: These men, were they scientific boxers?

Witness: Yes, it was a very good competition indeed; they were very clever, and were equally matched in weight

and strength, but Smith all through was the cleverer of the two and got a slight advantage in each round, totalling to four and a half points in the seventh round.

Mr. Gill: You gave him half a point on the first three rounds, and a point on the fourth, fifth, and sixth?

Witness: I made them all level in the seventh round, there was not a pin to choose between them.

Mr. Gill: In a fifteen-round contest would there have been any difficulty in the other man making up the other points?

Witness: No; in the previous big contest between Harris and Palmer, Palmer got the best at the beginning, and Harris made up his points and won in the finish.

Mr. Gill: In Judging all this boxing are you watching the competition in order to award the points in accordance with that rule that I have read?

Witness: Yes; I never take my eyes off them from the time they stand up to the time "Time" is called.

Mr. Gill: Mr. Corri is keeping the time, so you need not trouble about that?

Witness: No.

Mr. Gill: Would the hitting of men of this kind be very quick?

Witness: It was very quick in this case and very smart.

Mr. Gill: One way in which they show their skill would be in the guarding, slipping, ducking, and getting away?

Witness: Yes, that is where Smith showed his skill in one way, because he was so quick in avoiding Roberts.

Mr. Gill: In going back it was that he slipped up?

Witness: Yes, that is quite right. The account given of the eighth round was not, in my opinion, quite correct.

Mr. Gill: No, but did Mr. Churchill give a pretty correct account?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: At the beginning of the eighth round did Smith appear to be perfectly fresh?

Witness: They were practically the same as they were when they started the first round. There was no sign of weariness or distress to either man.

Mr. Gill: Mr. Churchill said that there seemed to be something the matter with Smith when he got up?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: Was there any reason why you should interfere?

Witness: No, because when the men went to their corners at the end of the seventh round, they were absolutely —to all appearances—the same. It looked as if something was the matter then; then I thought Smith was pretending, as is often the case with American boxers. The round only lasted about twenty seconds, and before I could form a definite opinion, the man sank down on his knees and the thing was over.

Mr. Gill: When it appeared there was some uncertainty about Smith, did Roberts stand away?

Witness: Yes, he did. I thought Roberts appeared to be of the same mind as myself, because he thought Smith was perfectly well at the end of the seventh round.

Mr. Gill: The Doctor has told us there were no marks of injury, we need not trouble about that. Now you are familiar with these rules?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: With regard to the contest and competitions, the difference between a contest and a competition is that there are a number of people entered in a competition——

Witness: And only two in a contest.

Mr. Gill: If there is any reason why a man cannot box with the man he ought to, he boxes with the Referee or somebody else?

Witness: Yes, he boxes a bye.

Mr. Gill: Then there is an interval of one minute in between the rounds of three minutes?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: Is it possible for a man to box fifteen rounds?

Witness: It is about the same as a man running a four or five mile race.

Mr. Gill: There is a rule here that a man who does not come up to time after ten seconds, loses?

Witness: Yes, that is so.

Mr. Gill: Is that the practice that has prevailed in the competitions that you have judged?

Witness: Yes, in professional competitions, but in the Army boxing competitions we have a rule whereby we can

stop the contest quicker than ten seconds if we wish, but with regard to professional contests we must be more exact and have a definite time.

Mr. Gill: So ten seconds is the time fixed upon?

Witness: Yes, in professional contests.

Mr. Gill: Take the sort of case which has been suggested. Suppose two men boxing fifteen rounds. Supposing at the end of the fourteenth round one man had got five points for each round and the other man had got nothing. The man who had got nothing, could he knock out the first man?

Witness: A Referee would not know his business who allowed a contest to go on while one man was getting the better. He would say, "I have seen sufficient," and would give the contest to the other man.

Mr. Justice Grantham: Is there anything in your rules suggesting that?

Witness: No, my Lord; but the Referee has power to take action outside the rules. It is in the last rule.

Mr. Gill: To take action not provided by the rules. Does he decide the contest to be at an end?

Witness: Yes; I have done so many times when it has been an uneven match.

Mr. Gill: At a contest of this kind, supposing a man was outclassed so that the other man was scoring points rapidly, would there be any difficulty in your declaring the contest at an end?

Witness: No; I should do so. It would not be sport at all; it would be farcical; it would be nonsense.

Mr. Gill: That would not be where a man was making five points at the beginning; that is in no way remarkable?

Witness: No.

Mr. Gill: With regard to the course of this particular contest; was there any heavy fighting?

Witness: No; you may say that this contest was a model contest; they were very evenly matched, both in strength and weight, but, as I said just now, Smith was the cleverer man of the two, and his defence was so good—it was for defence that I gave him that difference named on my card.

Mr. Gill: Supposing that a man not coming up after ten seconds—if there was no such rule as this—if a man made all his efforts in the first few rounds, would there

be any reason why he should not take a blow, and going down, be counted out?

Witness: No, that rule is put there to prevent that.

Mr. Gill: If there were not such a rule would it be possible to carry out such a contest?

Witness: No, it is the same as in any other sport. If a man does not go to the end of the race he must unavoidably lose.

Mr. Gill: He must go the course?

Witness: He must go the course.

Mr. Gill: Is ten seconds in fact an extremely humane rule giving that short time?

Witness: Yes, it is a proper rule. If a man had a couple of minutes in—a man might get an unlucky blow and he might be given two minutes to come round—he might go in to box when he would not be fit to.

Mr. Gill: Ten seconds gives him time to get up leisurely and face the man he was boxing?

Witness: Yes, professionals will sometimes take their ten seconds—it is a rest; it is not strictly fair, but they are entitled to it and they do it.

Mr. Gill: The idea of the ten seconds is if a man goes down he is to have ten seconds during which he can get up without interference, the other man standing away?

Witness: Yes. If a man goes down the first thing I say is "Stand right back," so as to give the other man time.

Mr. Gill: Of course these men know if they do not go——?

Witness: Oh, he would be liable to disqualification directly.

Mr. Gill: Where they are very close together the men might or might not know who is doing best?

Witness: I think that unless a contest is very close a man has some idea whether he is leading or not.

Mr. Gill: Supposing that a man exerting all his efforts for five rounds, and knowing that he was ahead and feeling that he was exhausted, gave a knock-out blow, his opponent could be counted out after ten seconds?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: And it would be very difficult and impossible to tell whether it was done on purpose?

Witness: It would be impossible.

Mr. Gill: I suppose there are cases. You have told me you have often stopped a contest. There are contests where they are obviously outclassed?

Witness: Certainly, they may be opposed by a very good man, and when they come into the ring one of the men has no pretension to box, and it is a farce.

Mr. Gill: The suggestion is that the man who was a scientific boxer might go on round after round, and the other man who was not so good as he is could knock him out?

Witness: I have never seen a man allowing himself to box like that in order to get this final knock-out blow which the uninitiated talk about.

Mr. Gill: We know what the precautions are with regard to the padding of the floor, layers of cushions on the posts. The ropes, what are they covered with?

Witness: With red cloth which you see in the streets when decorations are being put up.

Mr. Gill: With regard to the suggestion as to whether men hit each other hard when they are boxing. Taking your experience from the time that you were a boy, do men, boxing, hit each other hard?

Witness: I do not quite understand quite what you mean by "hard." If you mean by velocity——

Mr. Gill: Yes, velocity.

Witness: Yes, by hitting your opponent quickly. That is what you want to do if you can, like that, and try to hit him a terrific blow. He may not do so. He may hit or he may not hit the man.

Mr. Justice Grantham: Velocity makes up for weight?

Witness: Yes, my Lord, it does.

Mr. Marshall Hall: At any competition is it the object of a man to make the points of attack direct, clean hits with the knuckle part of the glove of either hand, on any part of the front or sides of the head or body above the belt?

Witness: Yes, that is what boxing is. You are not supposed to flick; that is not allowed. We should immediately say, "That won't do."

Mr. Marshall Hall: I see it goes on setting out the

different points of defence for which points are given: "Where points are otherwise equal the preference to be given to the competitor who does most of the leading off, or who displays the best style."

Witness: That is so. The man who keeps on cutting out the work, he gets a certain credit for doing so, because it is easier to box on the defensive than it is on the attack, and also for the best style.

Mr. Marshall Hall: In these three-round competitions I suppose the men box as hard as they can?

Witness: The difference between a long-round competition and these is that they box faster. They run faster in a hundred yards race than in a long race. You see men more exhausted at the end of a three-round competition than in a longer competition.

Mr. Marshall Hall: A man who goes the course in a fifteen-round competition, he must box more carefully?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Marshall Hall: Unless he were going to take advantage of the ten-second rule and go down?

Witness: That would not count.

Cross-examined by Mr. Muir.

Mr. Muir: I understand you to say without this ten-second rule you could not decide a boxing contest?

Witness: No, I do not think you could. I could decide it, but I mean to say it might happen that it would reduce the contest to a farce.

Mr. Muir: That you could not decide it so that the best man up to that point would win?

Witness: I do not follow your question.

Mr. Muir: Do you say that without this ten-second rule you could not decide a boxing contest so that the best man should win?

Witness: I could decide a contest up to the time that you are speaking of.

Mr. Muir: Why should not that show you which was the best man?

Witness: Only up to that time. If they are going to box eight rounds, and you are going to decide by what has happened in the second, you cannot decide it.

Mr. Muir: But if you are going to be knocked out in the second round you do decide it?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Then why do you say you cannot gauge the best man?

Witness: Not if you are going to box a fifteen-round contest.

Mr. Muir: Do you say the National Sporting Club Rules are in vogue at the contests at the Amateur Competitions?

Witness: No.

Mr. Muir: These rules differ from the Amateur Boxing Association rules?

Witness: Only in wording—the same in effect.

Mr. Muir: Have they got anything about rising in ten seconds?

Witness: Not actually ten seconds. I will read the rule to you. "In all competitions any competitor not coming up when time is called shall lose the bout."

Mr. Muir: Supposing a man is knocked down in an Army Boxing Competition, does that end the round?

Witness: No.

Mr. Muir: If a man is not able to get up, does that end the round?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: So when a man is unable to get up the Referee calls time?

Witness: No; he says that man is to be taken to his corner by his seconds.

Mr. Muir: Then he allows the ordinary interval between the rounds?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: When you are speaking of the amateur boxing rules you are speaking of the English boxing rules?

Witness: Certainly.

Mr. Muir: You know, do you not, that there is a Scottish Amateur Boxing Association?

Witness: I believe there is.

Mr. Muir: Which has a different rule?

Witness: I cannot say; I have never seen them. I know that the Scottish men come and box here with our rules at the championships.

Mr. Muir: Do you know what the rule is about a knock-out blow?

Witness: I do not know.

Mr. Muir: Let me read the rule.

Mr. Gill: I do not know, my Lord, if we have anything to do with the Scottish rules.

Mr. Muir: What do you say to this rule—"If in the event of a knock-out blow the round in which it occurs shall finish, and the marks for that round shall be awarded in accordance with the work done up to that point, the knock-out blow scoring as an ordinary point." What do you say to that rule?

Witness: I think it is a very bad rule, because you send the man up for the next round. It is a sort of thing which is very dangerous.

Mr. Muir: It is a rule which prevents it being to the interest of either of the competitors to knock out his opponent.

Witness: The Scottish men who box are as hot-headed men as I have ever seen.

Mr. Muir: Does not that rule make it against the interests of the competitors to knock out his opponent?

Witness: No, I do not think so, because I consider it is a wrong thing to do to send a man up after he has been knocked out as that rule describes.

Mr. Muir: It does not.

Witness: Does the rule end the competition—does the knock out end the competition?

Mr. Muir: Yes.

Mr. Justice Grantham: No, no.

Witness: If it does not end the competition then it is a bad rule.

Mr. Muir: In my consideration it does end the competition—it ends the round.

Witness: It is evident you have never seen a boxing competition, I should think.

Mr. Muir: I have never seen one at the National Sporting Club.

Witness: Or anywhere else.

Mr. Muir: "In the event of a knock-out blow, the round in which it occurs shall finish, and the marks for that round shall be awarded in accordance with work done up to that

point, the knock-out blow scoring as an ordinary point." Are you aware of the rule of the Federation of Working Men's Shelter Clubs?

Witness: I did not know there was such a Federation. It must be something very extraordinary if I have not heard of it in the boxing world.

Mr. Muir: Have you heard of the Public Schools Fencing and Gymnastic Club?

Witness: Yes, I have judged at them.

Mr. Muir: Is the person who draws up the rules Colonel Fox?

Witness: I have never seen them. I have judged at them under the National Sporting Club rules.

Mr. Muir: "Rough fighting will not be allowed."

Witness: That is the same here. Allow me to read it to you. It is to the same effect.

Mr. Muir: Where is it to that effect?

Witness: "Any competitor who is boxing unfairly" (reading to the words) "or by roughing at the ropes."

Mr. Muir: That, you say, is the same in effect as, "Rough fighting will not be allowed"?

Witness: It is the same.

Mr. Justice Grantham: I should think that roughing at the ropes is something which I do not understand. What does it mean?

Witness: It means rough fighting at the ropes. When one competitor is near the ropes he has no opportunity of using his skill.

Mr. Justice Grantham: Then you say that there can be no rough fighting unless it is at the ropes?

Witness: No, my Lord.

Mr. Muir: Does not it mean this, that a man gets his opponent against the ropes and pummels him there?

Witness: No.

Mr. Muir: Would that be "roughing at the ropes"?

Witness: Yes, but not holding and pummelling him.

Mr. Muir: I did not say "holding him."

Witness: I thought you did.

Mr. Muir: "No points are awarded for a knock-out blow; if a competitor is seen to be working for a knock-out blow he will be cautioned."

Witness: That is absurd. How can a man see if a man is working for a knock-out blow? I could never detect anybody working for a knock-out blow. It is absolutely impossible.

Mr. Muir: "If, on the other hand, a knock out takes place the decision will be awarded on the points already allotted to his opponent."

Witness: Several boy competitors at the last championships won their heats after their opponents were knocked out.

Mr. Muir: So that might be.

Witness: You say they should not. It is impossible to say whether a knock out is delivered by intention or accident.

Mr. Muir: You have asserted that there is no rule except that ten-second rule by which a boxing contest can be decided. I put it to you that either of those rules would decide and fairly decide.

Witness: I say no; I say it could, but might not. It all depends whether a man is boxing fairly or unfairly.

Mr. Muir: You say you would in your discretion stop a contest in which one of the parties is obviously outclassed?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Take a fifteen-round contest, how many points would one competitor have to be awarded in order to enable you to disqualify the other?

Witness: I never said I should disqualify the other.

Mr. Muir: Well, award the contest to his opponent?

Witness: If the contest be so bad that the man has no chance, I should say, "That is sufficient."

Mr. Muir: What number of points in an eight-round contest do you suggest would bring that about?

Witness: I should see. If the man was leading by fifteen points to twenty points out of forty, I should say it should not go on.

Mr. Muir: He could not have made five points in the eighth round?

Witness: No.

Mr. Muir: And fifteen points is the point at which you would stop it?

Witness: There is something in concurrent circumstances as well.

Mr. Muir: Might not this happen in the eighth round, that the man who was ten points behind should knock out his opponent?

Witness: It might happen.

Mr. Muir: And if it did happen he would win?

Witness: Yes, if it did accidentally happen, he would win.

Mr. Muir: Or if it intentionally happened?

Witness: It is impossible to say whether it is intentional or accidental.

Mr. Muir: Do you think it is essential to the well-being of the sport of boxing that that rule should be retained?

Witness: I do, most emphatically. It has been going on for twenty-five years and it has worked very well. This death of Smith is no argument against that rule.

Mr. Muir: In the course of the last season, though for the first time you regularly judged competitions at the National Sporting Club—how many competitions did you judge?

Witness: I cannot say—fifteen to twenty.

Mr. Muir: How many of those reached the fifteenth round?

Witness: I cannot say.

Mr. Muir: I suggest to you about six?

Witness: Six, or eight, or ten.

Mr. Muir: Did you hear the Secretary of the Club say it was six?

Witness: I did.

Mr. Muir: Is that correct?

Witness: I do not know.

Mr. Muir: Is he likely to be right?

Witness: I do not think that the Secretary really knew much about it, because he has really nothing to do with the boxing; I believe he was called as a witness for something utterly different.

Mr. Muir: Did not you yourself admit that on the question of the number of contests the Secretary would be more likely to know it than you?

Witness: I did.

Mr. Muir: What happened in the remaining twelve of those contests to prevent them reaching the end?

Witness: There were a variety of reasons.

Mr. Muir: Were any of the men counted out under the ten-seconds rule?

Witness: I think they were.

Mr. Muir: Most of them?

Witness: I cannot remember that.

Mr. Muir: Some of them were, anyhow?

Witness: Yes, undoubtedly.

Mr. Muir: Were any of those men who were counted out leading on the points?

Witness: I cannot remember what happened months and months ago.

Mr. Muir: You have witnessed thousands of contests at which you have judged?

Witness: Thousands perhaps is a little bit too much. I have seen thousands of men in the ring.

Mr. Muir: And never before this occasion have you seen an accident like this?

Witness: I have never seen any accident where a man has been injured other than this unfortunate affair.

Mr. Muir: How many of those thousands were at the National Sporting Club? A small or a great proportion?

Witness: A small proportion. I have only been there a season and a half.

Mr. Muir: Do you know at the National Sporting Club in four years there have been four deaths?

Witness: I know this by repute, not by my knowledge, that since the Club has been in existence there have been four deaths.

Mr. Muir: And those four deaths in the last four years?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Does not that suggest that the fighting there is different to what it is in your other experience?

Witness: It does not suggest it because I know there is no difference. There are greater precautions taken there than anywhere.

Mr. Muir: All the men dying from the same cause?

Witness: I do not know, but I think you are wrong. I believe a man died from a weak heart. The other three, I believe, were from injuries to the brain.

Mr. Gill: This man died, according to our case, by

slipping and his head coming in contact with the ropes.

Mr. Muir: Does not that suggest that it is different from what it is elsewhere?

Witness: No, I know it is not different.

Mr. Muir: Are all those that box in competitions at the National Sporting Club professionals?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Do they hit as hard as they can?

Witness: They hit quickly.

Mr. Muir: Do they hit as hard as they can?

Witness: What do you mean by hard?

Mr. Muir: Have you said all boxers hit as hard as they can?

Witness: Yes, but that means that they get in quickly. If you mean hard by quick, they do.

Mr. Muir: As hard as they can hit compatible with their getting home?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Under your rules is not it the obvious interest of competitors to knock their opponents out?

Witness: No, I do not admit that.

Mr. Muir: A man is winning at a point in the game, the seventh round, if you like——?

Witness: But the man does not know he is winning.

Mr. Muir: All the more he should try to win.

Witness: I do not see it at all, and no boxer would see it.

Mr. Muir: My friend Mr. Gill has put it to you that a man after the end of five rounds, in which he has fought his hardest, might then proceed to lie down?

Witness: Not lie down, I mean give up the contest, so as to get it stopped.

Mr. Muir: And be counted out. Have you not got a rule which meets that case?

Witness: No. I know what you mean; a man who falls down.

Mr. Muir: A man may disqualify a contestant who falls without receiving a blow?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Is not that to meet the case?

Witness: No.

Mr. Muir: Then what is it for?

Witness: What it says.

Mr. Muir: What is that for?

Witness: "To fall down to avoid a blow." If a man falls on the ground, according to that rule, it is not legitimate boxing.

Mr. Muir: If he does it accidentally?

Witness: That is a different thing.

Mr. Muir: But this rule does not say anything about accidental?

Witness: Not slipping?

Mr. Muir: Does not that mean lying down?

Witness: No, I do not mean lie down on the floor.

Mr. Muir: Goes down on his knees intentionally. Cannot you deal with him?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: You could disqualify him?

Witness: Yes; according to your rules you cannot disqualify him.

Mr. Muir: Why not?

Witness: I do not think so.

Mr. Muir: But, by the rules you can disqualify him?

Witness: I do not think so.

Mr. Muir: Why was that rule introduced that a Referee can disqualify a man for falling without receiving a blow?

Witness: That has been a rule from time immemorial. It is carried on from the old prize-ring rules; they do just the same thing, so I have been given to understand. If a man fell without a blow it was wrong and he was disqualified.

Mr. Muir: Will you look at that copy of the National Sporting Club Rules. You won't find those words in that copy; that is the copy which was used in 1900 at the inquest before Mr. Troutbeck?

Witness: It may be so, I cannot say.

Mr. Muir: Riley's death.

Witness: I do not know anything about it.

Mr. Muir: But you see those words, "falling without receiving a blow?"

Witness: I do not know——

Mr. Muir: Rule VI. of the present rules is, "the Referee

may disqualify a contestant for delivering a foul blow, intentionally or otherwise, for holding, butting, shouldering, falling without receiving a blow."

Mr. Justice Grantham: It is no good looking for something that is not there.

Mr. Muir: Can you tell me why it was changed?

Witness: No.

Mr. Gill: Is that an obvious rule that a man engaged in a contest of this kind—that a man falling down without a blow—that the Referee may take action of that kind?

Witness: Yes; it is manifestly unfair, even to a person who does not understand boxing.

Mr. Gill: Is there any rule which could be advised, which could provide for a man slipping accidentally and his head coming against the ropes?

Witness: Of course not.

Mr. Gill: You have been asked if this is the fourth death. The Club has been in existence since 1891?

Witness: I believe so.

Mr. Gill: Have they more contests there than all the others put together?

Witness: Yes. Every Thursday they have contests, and as many as sixty people boxing on one night.

Mr. Gill: Have there practically been more contests there than at all the other clubs put together?

Witness: Yes, I believe there have.

On the reassembling of the Court after luncheon, Mr. George Henry Vize was called, and in the course of a long examination by Mr. Gill, stated that he was the President of the Amateur Boxing Association, and had been interested in boxing for the past thirty-five years. In his day he had himself been an amateur boxing champion. He had on very many occasions acted as the referee at both amateur and professional competitions, including the Brigade of Guards, the Universities, the Amateur Championships, and also the competitions at the N.S.C. itself. During all those thirty-five years he had never seen any fatal result attending a boxing competition or anything approaching it. He did not think it was possible to show greater care in these contests than that which was displayed at the Club.

Lord Lonsdale was next examined by Mr. Gill.

Mr. Gill: Are you a member of the National Sporting Club?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: Have you been interested for many years in Boxing?

Witness: Yes, twenty-five years.

Mr. Gill: You have seen a great deal of it?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: Have you seen many competitions and contests under the National Sporting Club rules?

Witness: They have not existed that time.

Mr. Gill: Do you know the National Sporting Club rules?

Witness: Yes, but not by heart.

Mr. Gill: You would know them if I drew your attention to them?

Witness: Yes, I know most of them; they were all founded on Lord Queensberry's rules. There was an exhibition of boxing for various young men, and it was found necessary, for the sake of endurance and minimising danger, to make certain rules, and the foundation of these rules was taken up by a committee to minimise danger and increase science.

Mr. Gill: You know this rule to which attention has been drawn, this Rule V.—"In all contests the decision shall be given in favour of the contestant who obtains the greatest number of points. The points shall be for attack direct, clean hits with the knuckle part of the glove of either hand on any part of the front or sides of the head or body above the belt; defence, guarding, slipping, ducking, or getting away. Where points are otherwise equal the preference to be given to the contestant who does most of the leading off or displays the best style." Was that rule the subject of careful consideration?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Gill: From your knowledge of boxing is it a reasonable rule?

Witness: Yes, absolutely so.

Mr. Gill: The provisions in it with regard to giving a man ten seconds to get up?

Witness: Yes, there was a question which occurred, I think it was where two boys were boxing. Lord Queensberry came to the conclusion that a boy or a man could go down at any moment he liked, and the exhaustion was so great that it became dangerous to life; so if a person was not in a fit state to finish the contest that rule was made up.

Mr. Gill: It was from a humane point of view?

Witness: Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. Muir.

Mr. Muir: What were the rules that covered boxing contests before this rule?

Witness: It depends on what locality you refer to. You have got Scottish rules and English rules.

Mr. Muir: You told us of the origin of a certain set of rules?

Witness: I told you of the origin of the Queensberry rules.

Mr. Muir: You were asked about the origin of the National Sporting Club rules. Do you know anything about them?

Witness: They were taken from the Pelican rules.

Mr. Muir: Do you know anything about them?

Witness: They were founded on the Queensberry rules.

Mr. Muir: Where were they taken from?

Witness: They were taken from the fighting rules. They were to substitute science for brute force.

Mr. Muir: Did the rules which existed before the Queensberry rules necessitate a fight to a finish?

Witness: Yes, I should think they did.

Mr. Muir: With regard to public schools, do you know anything about the rules under which they are held?

Witness: I do not know them by heart.

Mr. Muir: Have you attended any competition?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Those rules are signed by Colonel Fox?

Witness: Yes.

Mr. Muir: Are those they?

Witness: Yes, sir.

Mr. Muir: Just read, will you, the beginning of the fourth rule?

Witness: "Rough fighting will not be allowed."

Mr. Muir: It is suggested that means roughing on the ropes?

Witness: I think it means cheating is not allowed.

Mr. Muir: You do not mean to suggest that rough fighting means "roughing on the ropes"?

Witness: I think it is a local term. If you ask me is "roughing on the ropes" and "rough fighting" the same I should say honestly it is not.

Mr. Muir: You will find "roughing on the ropes" in those rules?

Witness: Yes, because it comes under the head of wrestling.

Mr. Muir: No, no.

Witness: Yes, but that is the fact.

Mr. Muir: "Roughing on the ropes"?

Witness: That is wrestling; there are many forms of wrestling.

Mr. Muir: Just read the fifth rule.

Witness: "No points are awarded for a knock-out blow. If a competitor is seen to be working for a knock-out he will be cautioned, and if he does not desist he will be disqualified. If on the other hand a knock-out takes place by accident the decision will be awarded on the points already allotted to each competitor."

Mr. Muir: You have been present when those competitions have been decided?

Witness: Yes, but who is going to find out if a man is working for a knock-out blow? There is no such thing.

Re-examined by Mr. Gill.

Mr. Gill: Unless it is a man who has not seen a knock-out blow?

Witness: They know all about it.

Mr. Gill (taking them up): These rules are for schoolboys?

Witness: I suppose so. Colonel Fox's rules, there are other rules which come into force at Aldershot besides those.

Mr. Gill: Those are the Amateur Boxing Association Rules, which include the rule that a man loses a bout if he does not come up to time?

Witness: Yes.

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MR. C. F. GILL, K.C.

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Mr. Gill: You said the object of these rules was in the interest of science and humanity. In the days of the prize fight was there a limit to the time a round might take?

Witness: No. A round took its own time.

Mr. Gill: It would last until one of the men fell down or was knocked down?

Witness: Yes, I believe so; I never saw one.

Admiral the Hon. Victor Montague stated that he was a member of the N.S.C., and had for many years taken a very keen interest in boxing. He had witnessed innumerable contests and competitions at the club, and could vouchsafe that they were conducted with every precaution and care.

The Earl of Kingston, also a member of the N.S.C., deposed that he had taken a very great interest in boxing, and had witnessed many of the contests and competitions at the club premises. He agreed entirely with the evidence of the witnesses as to the fairness with which the boxing was carried on, and the care exercised by the club officials.

Mr. Gill said, before he addressed the jury, he should like to ask his lordship what questions he proposed to leave to them for determination.

Mr. Justice Grantham replied that in the first place he proposed to leave it to the jury whether this man Smith had met with his death by a knock-out blow; and next, whether, in reality, this was a prize fight in the ordinary acceptation of the term or whether it was a boxing contest pure and simple.

SPEECHES FOR THE DEFENCE

Mr. C. F. Gill, K.C.

Gentlemen of the Jury,—This case involves a question of Manslaughter, and yet I think it a case in which there is no necessity for me to appeal to you with any special directness. The affair is simplicity itself, and I submit there is but one verdict for you to give—that of "Not

Guilty." However, the question is one of Manslaughter, and the first point to be considered when such an issue is under consideration is what was the cause of death. Gentlemen of the Jury, you have heard it given in evidence, and in evidence as clearly given as it can be, that the deceased man Smith met his death by stepping back to avoid a blow, losing his balance, and falling with the back of his head on the ropes. This fact is certain. On the evidence of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Douglas, the latter an expert judge beyond all question, the deceased man was never struck in the fourth round with force enough to hurt him. And I will go so far as to say this: If ever a man met with an accidental death that man was Smith. Gentlemen of the Jury, having ascertained the cause of death—and the cause must appear to you as plain as cause can—it now becomes your duty to find out whether this cause of death resulted from the perpetration of an unlawful act. My learned friend on the opposite side has told you that it did; that it has resulted in the participators lying rightly under a charge of Manslaughter, though he is good enough to add of Manslaughter in a mild degree; and he has fortified his contention about different degrees by a story of somebody slipping upon a piece of orange peel put down on a causeway, which, however picturesque as an incident, has nothing whatever to do with the case in point. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, I will join issue in the directest manner with my learned friend. I tell you that this Sport of Boxing as carried on at the National Sporting Club *is* legitimate. Whether you individually approve of it or no is not the point. But if you don't approve of it or believe in it, don't interfere with it. Believe me it is in safe hands. In this connection as to the legitimacy of Boxing as carried on at the National Sporting Club, amongst other criticisms suggesting illegality, you have heard from my learned friend opposite a very great deal about a terribly mysterious "knock-out blow." It is a point which he has especially laboured. But strange to say, the expert witnesses called who can boast of actual experience for twenty-five or thirty years, do not seem to be at all familiar with its terrific qualities. More than this, Gentlemen of the Jury, you have heard it

distinctly stated by the Witness Douglas—and in direct contradiction to the suggestion of my learned friend on the other side—that this "knock-out blow" which is supposed to be the point at which all boxers aim who wish to win National Sporting Club Contests, is a blow purely the result of accident, and one which cannot be brought off by intention, supported by skill, with any certainty whatsoever. To put the matter in a nutshell, these experts have declared that this knock-out blow (in cases such as the one under consideration where trained Boxers meet) is an impossibility except through the purest accident. So much, Gentlemen of the Jury, for malicious design.

We now come (for I feel that I need not claim your attention much longer) to the celebrated ten-second rule of which you have perhaps heard more than enough. You have heard it inveighed against with all the vehemence which can be lent by a misdirected study of other rules which have small bearing on the matter. But what is the opinion of experts on this rule, against which the Prosecution, led by my learned friend, has levelled every criticism which it was hoped would undermine our case? Why, it is this: This rule providing for the ten-second period in which a man can recover himself or else be counted out has been incorporated especially by experts who have a thorough knowledge of the ways of Boxing, and is a merciful provision on the part of Humanity itself!

Gentlemen of the Jury, I have done. But without further traversing beaten and unproductive grounds of argument, I wish to put one final question to you. That question contains the pith of the whole contention, and I put this question to you in the firm conviction that your answer to it will be prompted by the unerring factor of plain English Common Sense. I ask you this: Because there is an inseparable element of risk in this noble English Art of Boxing is it to be stopped; is it to be stopped by the judicial interference of well-meaning Busybodies, or by a set of alternative rules more applicable to children at a Dame's School than to British Manhood holding World-Wide Empire?

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MR. MARSHALL HALL, K.C.

Gentlemen of the Jury,—I appear for Roberts, who is really the Principal in this Case. That is to say, he is the man who is supposed to have delivered the fatal blow which is supposed to have resulted in the death of Smith, though, as a matter of fact, it appears in evidence—in evidence which has been very plainly put before you—that this unfortunate man met his death by losing his foothold as he was trying to avoid a blow from Roberts, and striking the back of his head against the ropes of the National Sporting Club Ring. However, there Roberts stands indicted on a charge of Manslaughter. It is not necessary for me, Gentlemen of the Jury, to tell you that this is one of the most serious charges to be found in the Calendar. Another step and we are face to face with the gravest charge of all. But the fact is sufficient that this man Roberts stands here indicted for Manslaughter. It is true that my learned friend opposite, who has laboured the case with marked pains and ability to bring this charge home (whether in the interests of Justice, Sport, or some Society for the Protection of Old Ladies, it is impossible to conjecture), I say that though my learned friend has laboured to bring this charge of Manslaughter home, he has been gracious enough to suggest a mitigating plea after he has done the mischief. He admits that it is Manslaughter in the mildest form. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, I must tell you that Manslaughter is Manslaughter, and I must tell my learned friend on the opposite side that in this Count there are no technical degrees. It is all very well for him to come down here armed with the artillery of the Treasury and a book of Scotch boxing rules, and after having used all his ability to fix this serious charge on my client, to say that he has committed a grave crime of Violence as gently as he was able to commit it under the circumstances. What good will this paternal rider do to Roberts in the event of that conviction which I do not for one instant contemplate? Will it remove from him that stigma of Manslaughter which clings to a convict for a lifetime? In the event of his again following his profession as a Boxer, and being

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again, by what has been proved to be an accident, similarly circumstanced—that is to say again standing in the dock charged with a crime which he has never committed—can he count on having my learned and mitigating friend on the other side to stand at his elbow and again say that undoubtedly he killed a man, but did it as humanely as he could? No, Gentlemen of the Jury, my client can rely on no such dubious amenities, and therefore we will have no glossings here. We will have no half measures. We will thresh this issue out to the final end. Either Roberts is guilty of Manslaughter or he is not, and that he is not guilty I have the utmost confidence that I shall convince you.

In the first place let me point out to you, and impress upon you to the utmost of my power, the very significant fact that there can be no possible doubt that the best of feelings existed between Roberts and the deceased man Smith. You have had this in evidence. On being warned by Mr. Douglas before the Bout began against doing anything underhand or unfair, both Boxers replied, "Oh, sir, there is no fear about that. We are the best of friends, and we only want to see who is the better Boxer." I have only to point out to you, Gentlemen of the Jury, that one of these best of friends stands in the dock before you on the charge of killing the other in a Prize Fight. But, indeed, the suggestion is too puerile to demand your notice for any time exceeding a moment. If there is one thing clearer about this case than another—and there are many things clear in it which my learned friend opposite has ingeniously laboured to darken—it is that this contest had none of the objectionable features of a Prize Fight about it whatsoever. My learned friend, however, submits, and very insistently submits, that it was a Prize Fight, though he constantly calls it a Contest. He, in fact, alleges the deed and objects to the Word. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, *I* do not object to the word, though I submit that this was not the deed. The word "Fight" is a good English word which everybody can understand.

And I am going to fight my learned friend Mr. Muir to a finish—never mind the Ten Second Rule. Let us get at

once then to close quarters. "In fighting" is, I believe, the correct term. But it is some time since I myself engaged in the Noble Art, and memory becomes something musty.

My learned friend on the opposite side, however, is not so modest as myself in these particulars. On the technical questions of the force of blows, of whether a knock-out can be intentionally designed and deliberately effected to finish a contest—with an airy insouciance which does his self-confidence credit—he controverts, or tries to controvert, the sworn testimony of gentlemen who have known this game for twenty-five or thirty years, who have acted as Referees, who have delivered judicial decisions on it—decisions on which great hopes have hung. Gentlemen, I will not trouble you with the legal aberrations of my learned friend on these purely technical points. It will suffice for me to indicate one misconception into which he has fallen. It has been given over and over again in evidence in this case that in this contest, or fight, or whatever you like to call it, the blows delivered were not unnecessarily severe and that the deceased boxer bore no marks of punishment. But with the phantasmagoria of the "knock-out" beckoning him on to delusion, my learned friend will have it that the blows *were* severe. Granting that this was, as it clearly was, a scientific bout between clever boxers equally matched, is it not as clear as anything can be that it was an exhibition of clean and rapid hitting? And, Gentlemen of the Jury, one does not need Macaulay's schoolboy to tell us that Velocity carries Weight. So much for the Hard hitting. But my learned friend says that he understands the game as these gentlemen, experts, both of them, who have given evidence. Gentlemen of the Jury, all I have to say is that if my learned friend does understand the game as well as he thinks he does he most carefully conceals his own knowledge.

Gentlemen of the Jury, my learned friend Mr. Gill has traversed the technical grounds of this case with a tread so unerring that there is no need for me to follow him. He has told you that this sport of Boxing is legitimate whether you like it or not. I happen to like and admire

it myself as a sport which fosters and encourages the true spirit of Englishmen. So be it. Well, I am now going to look at this case—a case which might be a very serious one for those implicated, and, Gentlemen of the Jury, it has already proved a serious one for them in many ways. I am going to look at this charge of Manslaughter from an unusual point of view. I do not hesitate to tell you, Gentlemen of the Jury, that I treat the action of the Treasury in this matter with Ridicule. I look upon it as a piece of grandmotherly legislation inspired by misdirected zeal for the Public Safety, and fortified by a superficial reading of some Scotch rules of Boxing which my learned friend opposite has completely misunderstood. When I point out that my learned friend in the study of these Scotch rules has interpreted the end of a Round to mean the end of a Contest the abysmal nature of his misconception will be apparent. Shall we leave Scotland for a while? Shall we also leave the Federation of the Working Men's Shelter Clubs, and shelter ourselves and all panic-stricken Boxers and Authorities under cover of some rules of my own—rules, Gentlemen of the Jury, framed, it is true, on the spur of the moment, but which may tend either to abolish this dangerous yet English pastime, or, at all events, prevent the Manager of a Sporting Club being indicted for Manslaughter three times in three years and being now in the dock like some common felon on the Fourth Charge. Listen to me, Gentlemen of the Jury, and let that English common sense on which we implicitly rely tell you what you think of these suggestions—suggestions which may give a farcical turn to serious proceedings, but which will prove more efficacious than any Scotch rules in preventing any able-bodied citizen from being hurt with a boxing glove.

I suggest, then, that at all future boxing Competitions, whether held at the National Sporting Club or anywhere else, the combatants should wear leather jerkins, under which bells should be concealed—electric, if possible. The boxing-gloves should be of the largest size and should be plentifully smeared with Chalk. For each chalk mark seen on an opponent's doublet the striker

should be given a point. But if in the making of that mark he should happen to ring one of the bells, he should be instantly disqualified for unnecessary violence with the intention of effecting a knock-out, be rendered liable to an indictment for manslaughter.

Gentlemen of the Jury, you will say that this is farce. But if farce it be, it is the light under which these frivolous and vexatious proceedings strike me, and as I feel convinced they will strike you when, after a very brief consultation, you will return a verdict of Not Guilty against my Client and these Defendants. And for my client Roberts I will say this word, not because I feel that anything further need be urged in his behalf, but because I know that he deeply feels the position in which by a cruel accident he has been placed, and that this distress of his is not occasioned by thoughts in any way selfish. I will say this. If the deceased boxer Smith could only revisit these mundane scenes and see his three friends, who were also his seconds, charged with the manslaughter of himself he would be paralysed with horror and astonishment.

SUMMING UP.

Mr. Justice Grantham: Gentlemen of the Jury, this is undoubtedly a very important case, and one in which it is very desirable you should be able to give your verdict, one way or the other, so as to avoid any uncertainty in the future with regard to boxing.

Now this case has occupied a considerable time, but not too long to enable us to understand a little more than we did before what is the object of these rules, the National Sporting Club Rules, their origin, and the way in which the sport such as it is, is carried on in King Street, under the auspices of the National Sporting Club.

Now, as I said before, the question you will have to decide is what caused the death of the unfortunate man. Secondly, was that death—was the action of the parties, all of whom you can see in the Dock, was that guilty

conduct on their part in participating as they did in the various positions they occupied, one as referee, one as timekeeper, and some as seconds. Now, was their conduct legal or illegal? You will come to the conclusion whether it was a fight or whether it was a boxing contest—to show the distinction, was it a fight or was it a mere boxing contest. I do not use the word "prize fight," because I think it might be misleading. If it is a fight, it is a fight, the mere giving of a prize does not make it legal or illegal.

The question you have to determine is whether it was a fight, which is, if the parties meet intending to fight, and if one gives in from exhaustion and cannot proceed, whether it is with gloves or not. That is really what you have to determine here. It seems to me that it was upon that particularly the learned counsel for the Prosecution opened the case to you, and it was also for that reason, it seemed to me, that throughout this case, from his point of view very properly, he conducted it on the theory that this rule about which so much has been said, that this fifth rule—I think it is the fifth rule—no, part of the fifth rule, in reference to what has been called the knock-out blow—does of itself make this a fight.

Now, I am bound to say, I do not think that it is necessary that the existence of that rule makes it a fight, and I think I might go further and say that the absence of the rule makes it a fight. It is the question for you, whether it is a fight, and if the object of it is to say whether one can go on longer than the other. Whether this rule is in or not, it is obviously illegal to go on until the other one could not finish. Therefore I think the learned counsel put a little too much stress on this rule, and perhaps weakened his case by assuming it necessary to rely upon that.

Now let us look at the facts, and first of all with regard to the cause of death. These rules have been in existence for nine or ten years. I am really quite ignorant of the period they have been in existence; one has heard of boxing for some time, and I thought they had been in existence longer than that. What was the cause of death—the blow, the fall, or what was it that sent this man to his end?

Now, one cannot help feeling with those who instituted

these proceedings in the first instance, that the death resulted from a knock-out blow, that death resulted from a blow given by the Defendant Roberts, which caused the man to fall, and which caused his brain to be injured, when death resulted.

This case has been tried before, but I have not read the evidence, and I do not know what the evidence was before, but on the evidence to-day I think there can be very little doubt as to what your verdict must be on that part of the case, because this is a criminal trial, and it is your duty not to give a verdict against the prisoners unless the evidence is overwhelming. Now, is the case overwhelming that the man did die from a knock-out blow, or a blow of any sort? I am bound to say that the evidence is not overwhelming, but more than that, it seems to point very strongly to the fact that the unfortunate man met his death from falling on the rope.

Now what evidence is there of that? The evidence is all one way, because the Prosecution have not been able to call anybody who can give a different account of it than the people who were there. Those people who were there were more or less interested in the case, but I think it fair to say that no body of witnesses, whether they were prisoners or not—because they are prisoners, and one of the defendants was called—could give their evidence fairer than the witnesses who gave their evidence in this case.

The doctor has told you what his view of it is. He said he did not think it could have been from falling on the back, because if so the injury would have been there instead of at the side; but there is no evidence of any serious blow on the side of the head from the fist of Roberts, and therefore from the doctor's view of the matter it does seem to me much more likely that the man fell on the rope on the side of his head in the way that has been described, and the fracture of the blood-vessel of the brain was caused by the sudden jar, the sudden striking of this rope, which I suppose was fairly tight, and it was in consequence of that, that the man first showed signs of weakness, and was unable to put his foot down properly, and from which he eventually died.

We have to discuss the seventh and eighth rounds. When he came up for the seventh round he was knocked down. Did the fatal injury come from that blow? Now the evidence seems to be quite the contrary to that. The evidence is very strong upon that part of the case; that he was practically not struck at all that time is very likely indeed, because almost directly he came up to enter the contest again he seemed to collapse and go down on his knees.

That is not the way he would have fallen if he had fallen from a blow, because he would have been knocked down. The witnesses are very clear that he was not knocked down; he went on his knees as if from exhaustion, then he fell.

Then, Gentlemen, if that is so, I think it does show there was no knock-out blow on that occasion, and that he did not receive his injury from a knock-out blow, and I think your verdict ought to be that he died from a fall and not from a blow, but from his desire to avoid a blow, stepping back, or throwing his body back. Because if he had stepped back he would have kept his balance, but he tried to throw his body back to avoid a blow; his feet did not come after him and he fell on his back. Then that is not illegal; what Roberts did was only hitting at the man; he was perfectly entitled to do that, and he fell in his desire to avoid a blow.

One of the rules is that he is entitled to points if he succeeds in avoiding a blow, and therefore it seems on the evidence that his unfortunate death did result in his endeavouring to avoid a blow aimed at him by Roberts. If that is so I think your verdict should be that he died, not from the blow, but from attempting to get clear of a blow.

If that is so, it leaves also whether the parties who were engaged in this combat were engaged in a legal or an illegal act. Now I cannot help sympathising to a certain extent with Counsel for the Prosecution on this part of the case, because he is in this difficulty, he has no evidence to support him, the evidence is all on the other side.

In his very able speech he has shown you, or endeavoured to show you, why in his judgment, and why he hopes in

your judgment also, the very existence of this rule must necessarily make all their contests fights, and further, if his construction of it is right, it would be a fight; but then he has got no evidence to support that view, it is only his own view.

All the witnesses called by himself and all those called on behalf of the Defendants tell you distinctly that the rule was not inserted for the object he said it was, but with the desire to make sparring more scientific and less dangerous, and in the judgment of the witnesses called, these men who have given their evidence, it is certainly in favour of less injury than it is likely to create more. That is the difficulty it seems to me that the Prosecution are in, that all the evidence is one way.

It may be so clear that the Judge and the Jury ought to say, "This is rubbish, the evidence given on behalf of the prisoners, and I won't believe it," but then can we say that the evidence which has been given by these witnesses is all rubbish?

I do not profess to be an expert boxer or know anything about the rules, but you have to be guided by those who do know something about it, and we have had two of the Defendants who gave their evidence, Mr. Douglas——

Mr. Marshall Hall: Only one, my Lord, Mr. Vize was the other.

Mr. Justice Grantham: You are quite right. Take Mr. Douglas's evidence. Gentlemen, you heard it. I think he gave his evidence with very great propriety; it may not be true, but you have to say what right you have to disbelieve him. He has had twenty-five years' experience of boxing. He holds the position which a great many people wish to hold, namely, Champion Amateur Boxer, and nobody thought any the worse of him for that. I think he said he had no part in framing these rules, but he tells you from that twenty-five years' experience he believes that rule necessary to the interests of those fighting.

It is somewhat remarkable—I do not know if you quite caught what Lord Lonsdale said—I thought he said that these rules were founded on some rules drawn up by Lord

Queensberry for the purpose of minimising the danger of boxing to young fellows at College, and are to increase the less chance of injury than to make it more likely, and to bring out science, and to suppress brute force; I believe I have heard that, but I do not know. That is the evidence, and that they were drawn up by a Committee, and for that purpose.

It is said there is no rule against rough fighting. Mr. Douglas says, "We have got a right to stop it." Mr. Muir says, "Why do I not find it in the rules of the public schools?" Rough fighting will not be allowed, and no points will be allowed for a knock-out blow, and if a man is seen to be working for a knock-out blow he will be cautioned, and if he goes on he will be disqualified.

If you are making rules for boys' fighting or young fellows, it is much more necessary to put a rule in with regard to a knock-out blow or rough fighting than it is where you have got men who are skilled and fight in a scientific manner.

If you have got a big, rough fellow who knows nothing about fighting, and a light fellow who does know something about fighting, the first would know that his only chance would be to knock him out. You could detect what the boy who knew something about fighting was trying for; you could tell if he were working for a knock-out blow. One of the witnesses said no boxer would dare to do that, because the other man would know what he was trying to do. It does seem to be quite reasonable that Mr. Douglas should say, as he has said, that they inserted, or those who drew up the rules, drew them up for the purpose of avoiding danger, and they thought it better to put that in, because if a man does get a blow, or if he is knocked down, he must get up unassisted within ten seconds, and that his opponent retires meanwhile out of striking distance. He says he does not think it necessary to have the other words in, that if a competitor is seen to be working for a knock-out blow, because he says no man could do it, and he says where you are deciding a contest between skilled men nobody could tell, therefore the language of the rules is different.

The rules of the boxing competition say, "The Referee shall have power to stop a round if the man is unable to go on." It does not give the ten seconds limit, but that is in the power of the Referee to determine. "Any competitor not coming up at the time 'Time' is called shall lose the bout."

I must say I cannot see any practical difference between the Amateur Boxing Association Rules and the Rules of the National Sporting Club.

It has been said and not gainsaid that the soldiers' contests took place under these rules exactly as they are; they have always been looked upon with very great favour. It is very desirable soldiers should know how to use their fists, and I think it would be straining your position very much to hold that the rules must necessarily make the whole contests illegal.

Now I cannot help saying that I am afraid, if my charges to juries were looked at, it would be found that I had on many occasions advised the people to use their fists instead of the what—instead of using the knife. If you have been jurymen here I daresay you have been witnesses to a great many trials, even in London, where unfortunate people have met their deaths from knives. At any rate, my experience in the North of England, in the large seaport towns, is, that I never go there without trying men who use knives.

It is much better for a man to use the weapon that God has given him, namely his fists, because it is not so dangerous, and that is why it is that a great number of people are fond of boxing. On the other hand, it is very desirable that proper boxing under proper rules should be kept up; all people should not be afraid of using their fists when necessary.

As long as man is human, people will lose their tempers and wrongs will be done, and it is most desirable that Englishmen should never use another weapon, and never lose his temper, and always punish a man who is wrong. Therefore, the Counsel for the Prosecution are as right as the Counsel for the Defence are, to keep up the sport of England.

Now then, Gentlemen, what we have to determine is, whether or not either upon the insertion of that rule, that particular rule, in the National Sporting Club Rules, or even without it, if you believe that this contest was carried on with the intention that the parties should fight, as it were, to a finish, and fight until one gives in from exhaustion, or from injury received through such fighting, then, Gentlemen, your verdict should be "Guilty"; but if on the other hand you think it was simply a case of boxing or sparring, with rules proper for the purpose of preventing men going on or until exhaustion ensued or injury resulted, and with the desire to make it a pure question of science and as little injurious to the individual as possible, then, Gentlemen, your verdict will be "Not Guilty."

Gentlemen, I do not think I can, with advantage, address you longer; of course I could go through the evidence. It is not my practice to do it where a jury is familiar with it; I just draw your attention to the facts in that evidence, and now leave it in your hands to say whether the death ensued from a knock-out blow or whether it did not, and secondly, whether this was a fight or a boxing or sparring contest as I have just described. Consider your verdict, please.

The jury considered their verdict for two minutes.

The Clerk of the Court: Have you agreed upon your verdict, Gentlemen?

The Foreman: We have.

The Clerk: Do you find that the death was caused from a knock-out blow?

The Foreman: We do not, but that it was the result of an accident.

The Clerk: Do you find it was a fight or only a legitimate sparring contest?

The Foreman: That it was a boxing contest.

The Clerk: And you say that the Defendants are "Not Guilty"?

The Foreman: That is so.

The Defendants were then discharged.

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